NOW OR *NEVER*,

The *Holy*, *Serious*, *Diligent* Believer Juſtified, Encouraged, Excited and Directed: And the *Oppoſers* and *Neglecters* Convinced by the Light of Scripture and Reaſon.

By *Richard Baxter*.

To be Communicated by ſuch as want ability or opportunity themſelves to plead the Cauſe of *Serious Holineſs* for mens Conviction.

Luk. 7.35. *But wiſdom is juſtified of all her children.*

Nihil eſt ad defendendum Puritate *tutius: nihil ad dicendum* Veritate *facilius*. Ambroſ.

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The Preface.

IT *is a question more boldly than accurately debated by many;* [Whether a man may not be saved in any Religion, that is faithful to the principles of it by serious diligent practice?] *The true Solution is this:* Religion *is that which men hold and do to serve and please God.* 1. *If men make themselves a Religion of serving Idols or Devils instead of God.* 2. *Or if they place their service to God himself in things that are evil (as what evil is there that some men have not brought into their Religion, and fathered upon God?) the more* diligent *such men are in their Religion, the more they sin.* 3. *Or if they make themselves a Religion of irrational ludicrous ceremonies, their greatest diligence in this will not save them.* 4. *Or if they hold all the Essentials of the true Religion, except some one, it cannot save them while one thing is wanting, which is Essential to that Religion, and so necessary to salvation (which is the case of real Hereticks:) For they are not indeed of that Religion, if they want that which is Essential to it.* 5. *Or if they hold all that is Essential to the true Religion only Notionally, and hold any thing with it practically, which is contradictory and inconsistent with it, the soundness of*

their Notional belief will not ſave them from the mortal poiſon of their practical Hereſie or Error.

But 1. Whoſoever holdeth all that is neceſſary to ſalvation, and is ſerious and diligent in living according thereunto ſhall be ſaved, whatever error he holdeth with it. For if he be ſerious and diligent in the Practice of all things neceſſary to ſalvation, he hath all that is neceſſary to ſalvation; viz. in Belief and Practice: And it muſt needs follow, that his Errors are either not contradictory to the things neceſſary which he holdeth and practiſeth, or that he holdeth not thoſe Errors practically, but notionally, as an opinion, or uneffectual cogitation in a dream, which provokes not to action; and in ſuch a caſe the error keeps no man from ſalvation.

What is neceſſary to be believed by them that never hear the Goſpel, it ſo little concerneth us to know, that God hath not thought meet to make it ſo plain to us, as things that more concern our ſelves. But as it is certain, that without the Atonements, Satisfaction, and Reconciliation made by Chriſt, and without new terms of Grace to be judged by, and without his Grace for the performance of their part, no man can be ſaved (that hath the uſe of reaſon,) ſo there is ſo much knowledge neceſſary to ſalvation, as is neceſſary [to engage the heart to love God above all, and ſincerely to obey his revealed will, and to prefer the life to come before the tranſitory pleaſures of this life.] Now if any man can prove to me, that thoſe that never heard the Goſpel, can thus love God, and the life to come, and obey ſincerely, without the knowledge of the perſon, life, death, reſurrecti-

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on of Jesus Christ, and the Declaration of the attractive Love and Goodness of God in him, and in the work of our Redemption, then I should believe that such Negative Infidels may be saved: For God cannot damn a sanctified soul, that sincerely loveth him. But if the discovery of the Love of God in our Redemption be so necessary a moral means to ingage the heart (now corrupted by sin and creature-love) to the true Love of God, that this cannot be wrought without it; or if Christ give not his Spirit to produce the love of God in any but those that hear the Gospel, and believe in him, then no such persons can be saved by their Religion. For Christ is the way to the Father, and no man cometh to the Father but by him; and and the Love of God is absolutely and of its self necessary to salvation; and Faith in Christ is so far necessary to salvation, as it is necessary to bring men to the love of God, as pardoning sin and reconciled to them.

But if any should never so confidently conclude, that some that hear not of Christ may be saved, yet he must needs confess that the want of this clear and great discovery of the love and goodness of God, in his pardoning grace, and of the glorious life which he hath prepared for us, must needs make the love of God a very rare and difficult thing, and consequently their salvation rare and difficult in comparison of ours.

The Christian Faith, is [The believing an everlasting life of happiness to be given by God (with the pardon of all sin) as procured by the sufferings and merits of Jesus Christ, to all that are sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and do persevere

in love to God, and to each other, and in a holy and heavenly converſation.] *This is ſaving Faith and Chriſtianity, if we Conſent as well as Aſſent. All that was neceſſary to ſalvation to be believed, was formerly thought to be contained in the Creed, and that was the teſt or ſymbol of the Chriſtian Faith; and Chriſtian Religion is the ſame, and hath the ſame rule, and teſt, & ſymbol in all Ages. But ſince Faction and Tyranny, Pride & Covetouſneſs became the maſters of the Religion of too many, vice and ſelfiſh intereſt hath commanded them to change the Rule of Faith by their additions, & to make ſo much neceſſary to ſalvation, as is neceſſary to their affected Univerſal Dominion, and to their Commodity and carnal ends. And ſince Faction entred, and hath torn the Church into many Sects (the Greek, the Roman, the Armenian, the Jacobites, the Abaſſine, and many more) it ſeemeth meet to the more tyrannical Sect to call theſe ſeveral Religions, and to ſay that every man that differeth from them in any of their opinions or additions, which they pleaſe to call Articles of Faith, is of another Religion.*

† *And if the Word* Religion *be taken in this ſenſe, and if all that agree in One Chriſtian Religion, are ſaid to be of as many Religions, as differ-*

† And yet when they have divided the Church, and damned the greateſt part of Chriſtians, and raged with fire and ſword againſt their brethren, they confeſs themſelves that it is no point of faith at all, that it is of *Divine right* that the Biſhop of *Rome* is St. *Peters* Succeſſor, and not only of humane right.

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ent opinions, in points that ſome call neceſſary, then I anſwer the Queſtion thus.

And muſt the Church be divided, and moſt be damned for not believing or ſubmitting to a humane Ordinance? If we be of many Religions, is not Popery then a humane Religion? The very words of *Smith* Biſhop of *Chalcedon*, the chiefeſt of the Engliſh Popiſh Clergy, are theſe, *Survey* c. 5. "To us it ſufficeth that the Biſhop of "*Rome* is St. *Peters* Succeſſor, and this all "the Fathers teſtifie, and all the Catholick "Church believeth, but whether it be *jure* "*divino*, or *humano*, is no point of faith.] And how do their Laicks here know what is a point of faith, but by the teſtimony of their Prieſts?

He is the true Catholick Chriſtian that hath but One, even the Chriſtian Religion: And this is the caſe of the Proteſtants, who caſting off the additions of Popery, adhere to the Primitive ſimplicity & unity: If Papiſts, or any others, corrupt this Religion with humane additions and innovations, the great danger of theſe Corruptions, is, leſt they draw them from the ſound belief and ſerious practice, of that antient Chriſtianity which we are all agreed in: And (among Papiſts, or any other Sect) where their corruptions do not thus corrupt their Faith and Practice in the true Eſſentials, it is certain that thoſe corruptions ſhall not damn them. For he that truly believeth all things that are eſſential to Chriſtianity, and liveth accordingly with ſerious diligence, hath the promiſe of ſalvation: And it is certain

that what error that man holdeth, it is either not inconsistent with true Christianity, or not practically, but notionally held, and so not inconsistent as held by him: For how can that be inconsistent which actually doth consist with it?

If a Papist or any other Sectary do seriously love God, and his Brother, and set his heart upon the life to come, and give up himself to the merits and Grace of Jesus Christ, and the sanctification of the holy Spirit, to be fitted for that glory, and liveth by faith above the world, and mortifieth the desires of the flesh, and liveth wilfully in no known sin, but presseth after further degrees of holiness, I doubt not of the salvation of that person: No more then of the life of him that hath taken poison but into his mouth and spit it out again, or let down so little as nature and antidotes do expel. But I will not therefore plead for poison, nor take it, because men may live that thus take it.

Having answered this great Question Reader, I am now come up to the subject of my following discourse, and to tell thee that though it be a great question whether serious diligence in a corrupt Religion will save a man, it is past all question, and agreed on by all sides, that no Religion will save a man that is not serious, sincere and diligent in it. If thou be of the truest Religion in the world, and art not true thy self to that Religion, the Religion is good, but it is none of thine. Objectively thou art of a true and good Religion, the things in themselves are true and good; but subjectively, thou art sincerely of no Religion at all; for if thou art not serious, hearty and diligent in it, it is cer-

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fain that thou doſt not truly entertain it, and make it thine; but it is thy Books that have the true Religion, or thy tongue or fantaſie, or brain, but not thy heart, and the beſt meat on thy table, or that goeth no further then thy mouth, will never feed thee, or preſerve thy life. So certain is the ſalvation of every holy mortified Chriſtian, and ſo certain the damnation of every ungodly, worldly, fleſhly ſenſualiſt that I had a thouſand fold rather have my ſoul in the caſe of a godly Anabaptiſt, yea or a Monk or Fryar among the Papiſts that liveth a truly heavenly life, in the love of God and man, and in a ſerious diligent obedience to God according to his knowledge, then in the caſe of a Proteſtant, or whomſoever you can imagine to be righteſt in his opinions, that is worldly, and ſenſual, and a ſtranger (if not an enemy) to the power and ſerious practice of his own profeſt Religion, and void of a Holy and Heavenly heart and life. If ever ſuch a man be ſaved, the principles of all Religion do deceive us.

And certainly ſuch mens hypocriſie doth aggravate their ſin, and will encreaſe their miſery. So many as there be in the world, that profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, and yet are not ſerious and diligent in their Religion, but are ungodly neglecters or enemies of a holy life, ſo many Hypocrites are in the world. And I wonder that their conſciences call them not Hypocrites, when they ſtand up at the Creed, or profeſs themſelves Believers: though the Congregation ſeeth not [hypocrite] written in their foreheads, God ſeeth it written on their hearts, and thoſe that converſe with them may ſee it written in their lives. An

yet these men are the forwardest to cry out against Hypocrites: The Devil hath taught it them to stop the suspition and the chase of conscience, as he hath taught the greatest Schismaticks or Church-dividers the Papists) to cry out most against Schism and division, and pretend to unity. But these shifts do blind none but fools, and forsaken consciences; and the cheat that is now detected by the wise, will quickly by God be detected before all the world. Till then let them make merry in their deceits: who would envy the drunkard the pleasure of an hours swinish sick delight? This is their portion, and this is their time; As we have chosen and covenanted for another portion, we are content to stay the time assigned, till God shall tell them & all the world, who was sincere & who the hypocrite. For our parts, we believe that he is most or least sincere, that is most or least serious in the practice of his own profest Religion.

For my part, I must profess that (by the mercy of God) I have made it the work of many a year, to look about me and think wherein the felicity of man doth indeed consist: And I have long been past doubt (as much as I am that I am a man) that it is not in transitory sensual delights; and that these are such lean and dry commodities, and pittiful pleasures, leaving men so speedily in a forlorn state, that I am contented that my greatest enemy have my part of them. I have renounced them to God (as any part of my felicity) and I renounce them to men: Let them do with me about these things as God will give them leave. I will have a portion after death, or I'e have none.

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And the case is so palpable, that it is my admiration that the contrary deceit is consistant with the nature and reason of a man; and that so many Gentlemen and Scholars and persons of an ingenuous education, can no better distinguish, and can possibly conquer their reason so easily with the presence or sensual delights, and so easily make nothing of that which will be to morrow and for ever, meerly because it is not to day. Well! I must say the Wisdom and Justice of God is abundantly seen in the Government of the world with the Liberty of the will, and determining that all men should speed as they choose.

It may be the Reader will say, he expected that instead of writing such popular discourses, I should have vindicated my self against the accusations, that in multitudes of Libels and Pamphlets are scattered abroad against me. But doth he think that man is seriously a Christian that is not more zealous for God and Religion, and the souls of men, then for himself? Have I nothing else to do with my time & labour, but plead cause of my own which God will so speedily and effectually plead? Will it not be time enough to be justified at the Bar and day of God? I am content that they carry it as they desire till then (were it not more for their own and other mens sakes then mine) Am I like to forsake my life & all for Christ, & endure torments if I were called to it, if I cannot endure to be reviled and slandered by passionate men? Was it for nothing that our Lord would not answer for himself when he was accused before Pilate? Shall they be able to calumniate under the threatnings of the Revenge of Heaven? and shall

I not be able to be silent under such a promise, as Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. The servant of the Lord must not strive! *Our Lord gave us an example of not reviling again, when he was reviled:* He made himself of no reputation, but endured the cross and contradiction of sinners, despising the shame. *I confess I think when Gods interest, and the good of others doth require it, a man should not be wanting to his own defence, and I have long ago written that which will satisfie the impartial: But when I saw that it is like to tend to heats, and set more on work, I had rather let men call me all the names they can devise, and voluminously accuse me of any thing that malice shall suggest, then do any thing to foment contentions in the Church. But if God convince me that it is my duty to detect the calumnies of man, it is a work soon done.*

But what good will it do the world for me to open the numerous untruths, that other men have published, or to confute every Script; when all that I converse with are satisfied already, and believe not the reproaches; and all the evidence in the world will not satisfied those that will not read it, or are resolved by their malice or interest never to be satisfied?

For my part, I doubt not but God and their consciences will give them such a Confutation as shall be sufficient to them and me to end the controversie.

My work is to plead the Cause of God and holiness against the profane and sensual world, and no further to plead any Cause of my own, then is necessary to that. If I must bear the effects of

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mens displeasure, I had an hundred times rather it were for pleading for Holiness, and Love, and Peace, and Concord, against impiety, uncharitableness, and divisions, then for defending my self, or upon the account of Ceremonies or smaller matters. And if for these I bear it, I doubt not of more comfort at the present, much less do I doubt of a better issue then false accusers can expect. We shall be shortly upon even ground: The time is short: The pleasures of sin, the triumphs of malice, the sufferings of innocency, are but for a moment. I envy them not so short and dark day: The Judge is at the door that will judge all again, and set all streight, and judge in righteousness. When I am afraid of leaving a noisom and unrighteous world, and ending all my pain and trouble, and being beyond the reach of malice, then I will fear what man can do. Let them keep me out of heaven, or deprive me of my peace and comfort if they can: If they fear not the threatnings of God against the malicious and unjust, surely I have less reason to fear their threatnings. When they have done their worst to others, let them save themselves from death if they can: I am devoted to God, and I never yet found cause to repent it: I am resolved to use the utmost of my power for the interest of Holiness, Charity and Peace, and for loyalty to the King, and obedience or patient submission to Superiors: And if yet I bear the fruits of fury, let those that insult over sufferers, as if they were therefore guilty or miserable, remember that we could have avoided it if we would, and could have found the way of applause and prosperity as

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well as they; and that no man takes that for his misery which he chooseth! If this kind of preaching or writing offend, could not I have avoided it? I am not in love with sufferings from men, nor will I escape them at the rates of Gods displeasure. I never think my self in the highest form of christians, till I am more conform to the sufferings of Christ, and have endured more then yet I have.

It is the Christians old Apology in Tertullian: Quasi non totum quod in nos potestis nostrum si Arbitrium Certe si velim Christianus sum tunc ergo me damnabis: si damnari velim: Quum vero quod in me potes, nisi velim non potes jam meæ voluntatis est quod potes, non tuæ potestatis: Proinde & vulgus vane de nostra vexatione gaudet. Proinde & nostrum est gaudium quod sibi vendicant, qui malumus damnari quam a Deo excidere. Contra, illi qui nos oderunt, dolere non gaudere debebant, consecutis nobis quod eligimus.] Tert. Apologet. cap. 39.

That is, " *As if all that you can do against us* " *were not our own choice! (or will) Certainly* " *it is because I will that I am a Christian, there-* " *fore if I will be condemned, then thou wilt* " *condemn me. And when that which thou canst* " *do against me, thou canst not do, unless I will;* " *it is not now from thy power that thou canst* " *do it, but from my will: And therefore the* " *vulgar do in vain rejoyce at our vexation. And* " *therefore it is our joy, which they challenge to* " *themselves, while we had rather be condemned* " *then fall from God. On the contraty they that hate*

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us should grieve and not rejoyce while we attain but what we choose.

For my part, if the world will needs be mad, I think both the laughing and the weeping Philosopher are more excusable then he that would be over-angry at them, or over-busie in disputing with them; saith Seneca [Quare fers ægri rabiem & phrenetici verba? nempe quia videntur nescere quid faciunt. Quid interest quo quisque, vitio fiat imprudens? Sen. de Ira. l. 3. c. 26. *Anger and phrensie are but several wayes of a mans losing his wit; and therefore he that can bear with one, should somewhat bear with the other: (Though indeed voluntarinesse, or involuntarinesse maketh a great difference.) It is not worth a mans time and labour and cost to be over solicitous in his own vindication, let the world say of him what they please.* [Multum temporis ultio absumit. Multis se injuriis objicit, dum unam dolet. Diutius iracscimur omnes quam lædimur.] Sen. de Ira 1.3.c.27. "*Revenge takes up a deal of time: He that com-*
"*plaineth of one injury, objects himself to many.*
"*We are all angry longer then we are hurt.*

I have truly given you now the Reasons, why I rather chose to speak these common necessary things, against the Devils party, the ungodly, the enemies, or neglecters of serious Holiness, (agreeable to the subject of his Majesties Christian and excellent Declaration against Debauchery at his entrance upon his Royal Government) then to meddle with any of the contending parties of these times (who are so angry because in obedience to authority I once endeavoured to re-

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concile them) or to be unseasonable in pleading any cause that is my own. And now referring the Reader to this short Discourse, I must first desire that he misunderstand me not in one or two passages. 1. That my citation of the passage in the Homiles, be not taken as if I spoke a word against it, though I say, I dare not my self subscribe it: For though I think my self, that seeing a persecutor like Saul may repent, and be pardoned; a mocker at Godliness may Repent and be forgiven also: Yet I am resolved still to suspect my own understanding, rather then to speak against the doctrine of the Church.

2. Think it not strange that I reprehend even Ministers that are secret, or open opposers of a holy diligence: For our foresaid Homily telleth us, as followeth: Hom. for Inform, &c. part 2. p. 150, 251. [Examples of such scorners, we read in 2 Chron. "When the good King "Hezekiah in the beginning of his Reign had "destroyed Idolatry, purged the Temple, and Re-"formed Religion in his Realm, he sent Mes-"sengers into every City to gather the people to "Jerusalem to solemnize the feast of Easter in "such sort as God hath appointed. The Posts "went from City to City——And what did "the people think ye? Did they laud and praise "the name of the Lord that had given them so "so good a King, so zealous a Prince to abolish "Idolatry, and to restore again Gods true Reli-"gion? No, no; the Scripture saith, the people "laughed them to scorn, and mocked the Kings "messengers. And in the last Chap. of the same "Book it is written, that Almighty God having

"compassion

" compaſſion on his people ſent his Meſſengers the
" Prophets to them, to call them from their abo-
" minable Idolatry and wicked kind of living: But
" they mocked his Meſſengers, they deſpiſed his
" words, and miſuſed his Prophets, until the
" wrath of the Lord aroſe againſt his people, and
" till there was no remedy.]——The wicked peo-
" ple that were in the dayes of Noah made but a
" mock at the Word of God, when Noah told them
" that God would take vengeance on them for
" their ſins——Lot preached to the Sodomites,
" that except they repented, both they and their
" City ſhould be deſtroyed; They thought his ſay-
" ings impoſſible to be true; they ſcorned and
" mocked his admonitions, and reputed him as an
" old doting fool: But God——burnt up thoſe
" ſcorners and mockers of his holy Word. And
" what eſtimation had Chriſts doctrine among the
" Scribes and Phariſees? What reward had he
" among them?——The Phariſees? which were
" covetous, did ſcorn him in his Doctrine. O then
" you ſee that worldly rich men do ſcorn the do-
" ctrine of their ſalvation; the worldly wiſe men
" ſcorn the Doctrine of Chriſt as fooliſhneſs to
" their underſtandings. Theſe ſcorners have ever
" been, and ever ſhall be to the worlds end. For
" St Peter propheſied, that ſuch ſcorners ſhould
" be in the end before the latter day. Take heed
" therefore my brethren, take heed: be ye not
" ſcorners of Gods moſt Holy Word: provoke him
" not to pour out his wrath upon you, as he did
" upon thoſe Gibers and Mockers: Be not wil-
" ful murderers of your own ſouls.] Thus far the
Homily.

And

And no marvel if Priests may be guilty as well as people, if it be true that is said by the Church in Hom. 3. *against peril of idolatry*, p. " 56, 57. [*But a true Preacher to stay this mis-* " *chief, is in very many places scarcely heard once* " *in the whole year, and somewhere not once in* " *seven year, as is evident to be proved. Further* " *it appeareth not by any story of credit, that true* " *and sincere preaching hath endured in any one* " *place above an hundred years.*] *But it is evi-* " *dent that Images, superstition, and worshipping* " *of Images, and idolatry have continued many* " *hundred years.* —— *For preaching of Gods Word* " *(most sincere in the beginning) by process of* " *time waxed less and less pure, and after cor-* " *rupt, and last of all altogether laid down and* " *left off, and other inventions of men crept in* " *place of it.* —— *So that Laity and Clergy, learn-* " *ed and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees* " *of men, women and children of all Christendom* " *(a most horrible and dreadfull thing to think)* " *have been at once drowned in abominable Idola-* " *try, of all other vices most detested of God, and* " *most damnable to man, and that by the space of* " *eight hundred years. So far the Church of* England.

And though I am far from crediting the many fabulous stories in that and such other Books; yet I shall recite one instance in the life of Philip Nerius, *the Father of the Oratorians, which shall shew you, that even among the Papists, holy serious diligence where it is, hath the same usage from the prophane both Clergy and Laity, as in other places, and so that every where* Holiness *is*

persecuted

perſecuted by men, profeſſing the ſame Religion with thoſe they perſecute.

The meetings of the Oratorians, and their exerciſes, ſo like thoſe now abhorr'd by many, are by Baronius (that was one of them) thus deſcribed, as you may ſee in the life of Nerius, p. 45.

"Certainly by the Divine wiſdom was it brought "to paſs, that in our times—Aſſemblies were in-"ſtituted in the City, much what after the form of "thoſe Apoſtolical Conventions, ſuch eſpecially "as by the Apoſtle were oppointed for diſcour-"ſing of divine matters, both for edifying "the hearers, and for propogating the Church. "It was agreed that the zealous Chriſtians "ſhould meet a days at St. Hieroms Oratory, and "there a Religious meeting ſhould be held after "this manner. Firſt, ſilence being made, "they began with prayer, and one of the bro-"thers reads ſome pious leſſon. At the read-"ing of which, the Father uſed to interpoſe upon "occaſion, explaining more fully, enlarging and "vehemently inculcating on the minds of "the Auditors, the things read, continuing his "diſcourſe ſometime a whole hour (to the great "ſatisfaction of the hearers) dialogue-wiſe, "asking ſome of the company their opinions about "ſuch a thing. Afterward by his appointment, "one of them went up into the Desk, raiſed "upon ſteps, and made an Oration without flou-"riſhes, or varniſh of Language, compoſed out "of the approved and choice lives of Saints, ſa-"cred Writ, and ſentences of Holy Fathers. He "that ſucceeded him, diſcourſed after the ſame "manner, but on a differing matter. Then followed

the

" *the third, who related some part of the Church* " *story in the order of its several Ages. Every of* " *these had his half hour allotted him, and per-* " *formed all with marvellous delight and appro-* " *bation: Then singing some Hymn, and going* " *to prayers again, the company broke up. All things* " *thus ordered, and ratified by the Pope, as far as* " *the times would suffer, the beautiful face of the* " *Primitive Apostolical assembling, seemed to be* " *revived again, whereat all good men rejoycing,* " *and many taking their Model from them, the* " *like exercises of piety were set up and practised* " *in other places.*] So far **Baronius.**

If any say that this long and zealous exercise was not in private houses; I Answer, Allow us an Oratory, as the Pope himself allowed them, and we had rather far be there then in private houses: But if any that hinder such from being publick, shall then reproach it for being in a less publick place, they scarce play fair. The Church of **England,** *in the third part of the Serm. against the peril of idolatry,* p. 66, 67. *saith.* " *In* " **Maximinian** *and* **Constantius** *the Emperours* " *Proclamation, the places where Christians re-* " *sorted to publick Prayer, were called Conven-* " *ticles.*] *See further.*

But how were the Oratorians esteemed and used? In **Chap.** 16. *of* **Nerius's** *persecutions, after the mention of mens rancor and railing that maligned him, it follows,* p. 56. *that* " *The Prelate* " *that was Deputy of the City, moved by the re-* " *ports of them that bore a spleen to* **Philip,** *sent* " *for him, and reprehended him sharply: Is it not* " *a shame (saith he) that you who profess a con-*

" *tempt*

" tempt of the world, ſhould hunt for popular
" applauſe, and walk through the City guarded
" with troops, with ſuch nets as theſe, fiſhing for
" Church-preferments?] When having ſhrewdly
" taunted him with ſuch like expreſſions, he pro-
" hibits him the hearing of Confeſſions for fifteen
" dayes, and to uſe the cuſtomes of the Oratory,
" but by leave firſt obtained, or to lead about
" with him any companies of men, threatning
" impriſonment upon his diſobedience: Neither
" would he let him depart, till he put in ſecurity
" for his appearance, ſaying — Come, you do all
" this, not for the glory of God, but to make a party
" for your ſelf. — Mean time, while the good man
" was commending himſelf to God, having in-
" treated divers religious perſons to be in-
" ſtant in Prayer about this buſineſs, one ap-
" peareth and ſaith — This trouble ſhall be quick-
" ly over, and the work that is begun be more
" ſtrongly confirmed; they who reſiſt now, ſhall
" aſſiſt hereafter; and if any one ſhall dare to
" oppoſe it any longer, God ſhall ſpeedily avenge
" it on him; the Prelate, that is your cheefeſt
" adverſary, ſhall certainly dye with 15. dayes.]
" And it fell out preciſely as he foretold: for
" the Prelate (the Popes Deputy) relating the
" proceedings to his Holineſs ſomewhat partially,
" died ſuddenly. — No ſooner was this blaze of
" perſecution out, but a much fiercer was kindled
" againſt the Order: For under pretext of Piety
" and Religion, ſome poſſeſſed the Pope that the
" Preachers of St. Hieroms many times deli-
" vered things ridiculous and unſound, which ar-
" gued high indiſcretion or ignorance, and muſt
" needs endanger their hearers.]

I would not have troubled you with any of these citations, but to let those know that are offended at my reproof of impious Ministers, that in all places and parties in the world where there is any serious diligence for salvation, there are alwayes enemies of the same Profession, even among the Clergy as well as others. The hindering of Holy Diligence and Seriousness, is the work of the Devil and his Instruments in the world. The promoting it is the work of Christ, and of his servants. The great actions of the World are but the conflictings of these two armies, the salvation of the Conquerors, and the damnation of the conquered being the end. By this contending for Faith and Holiness, and bearing the Cross, I take my self bound to perform my Covenant of [professing the Faith of Christ crucified, and manfully fighting under his Banner against the Devil, the World and the Flesh, to my lives end.] Reader, thou art engaged to the like as well as I, and shalt be judged accordingly, and reap as thou hast sowed. CHOOSE *and* DO *as thou wilt* SPEED.

Eccleſ. 9. 10.

Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt.

THe *mortality of man* being the principal ſubject of *Solomon* in this Chapter, and obſerving that wiſdom and piety exempt not men from death, he firſt hence infers, that *Gods love or hatred* to one man above another, is not to be gathered by his dealing with *them* here, where *all things* in the common courſe of providence *do come alike to all.* The *common ſin* hath introduced *death* as a *common puniſhment*, which levelleth all, & endeth all the *contrivances*, buſineſſes and enjoyments of this life, to good and bad; and the diſcriminating *juſtice* is not *ordinarily* manifeſted here: An *Epicure* or *Infi-*

del would think *Solomon* were here pleading *their* unmanly *impious cauſe*: But *it is* not the *ceſſation* of the *life*, or *operations*, or *enjoyments* of the *ſoul* that he is ſpeaking of, as if there were no life to come, or the ſoul of man were not immortal; But it is the *ceſſation* of all the *actions*, *and honors*, *and pleaſures* of *this life*, which to good or bad ſhall be no more. *Here* they have no *more* reward, the memory of them will be here forgotten. *They have no more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the Sun*, verſ. 5, 6.

From hence he further inferreth, that the *comforts* of life *are* but ſhort and tranſitory, and therefore that what the *creature* can afford, muſt be preſently taken; And as the wicked ſhall have no more but *preſent* pleaſures, ſo the faithful may take their lawful comforts in the *preſent* moderate uſe of creatures; For if their delightful goodneſs be of right and uſe to any, it is to them; And therefore, though

though *they* may *not* uſe *them* to *their* hurt, to the pampering of their fleſh, and ſtrengthening their luſts, and hindering *ſpiritual duties* benefits, & ſalvation; yet muſt they *ſerve the Lord with joyfulneſs, & with gladneſs of heart, for the abundance of all things*, which he giveth them, *Deut.*28.47.

Next, he *inferreth* from the *brevity* of mans life, the *neceſſity of ſpeed*, and *Diligence in his duty*. And this is in the *words* of my *Text*: where *you* have 1. *The duty commanded.* 2. *The reaſon* or *motive* to enforce it.

The *Duty* is in the firſt part; [*Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do*] that is, whatever work is aſſigned thee by God to *do* in this thy tranſitory life [*do it with thy might*] (that is, 1. *Speedily*, without delay; 2. *Diligently*, and as well as thou art able; and not with ſloathfulneſs, or by the halves.)

2. The *Motive* is in the laſt part. [*For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledg, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt*] (that is, It muſt be

now or never: The *grave*, where thy work cannot be done, will *quickly end* thy opportunities.) The *Caldee* Paraphraſe appropriates the ſenſe too narrowly to *works of charity*, or *Alms*; [*whatſoever good and almſgiving thou findeſt to do*]: and the moving reaſon they read accordingly [*for nothing but thy works of righteouſneſs and mercy follow thee.*] But the words are more general, & the ſenſe is obvious, contained in theſe two Propoſitions.

Doct. 1. *The work of this life cannot be done, when this life is ended.* Or, *There is no working in the grave, to which we are all making haſte.*

Doct. 2. *Therefore while we have time, we muſt do our beſt: or do the work of this preſent life with vigour and diligence.*

It is from an unqueſtionable and commonly-acknowledged *truth*, that *Solomon* here urgeth us to *diligence* in duty; and therefore to *prove it* would be but loſs of time. As there are *two worlds* for man to live in and ſo *two*

lives

lives for man to live; ſo each of theſe *lives* hath its *peculiar employment*. *This* is the life of *preparation*: the *next* is the life of our *Reward* or *Puniſhment*: We are *now* but in the *womb* of *eternity*, and muſt live hereafter in the *open world*. We are *now* but ſet to *ſchool* to *learn* the work that we muſt do for *ever*: This is the time of our *apprentiſhip*: we are *learning* the *trade that* we muſt *live upon* in Heaven. We *run now*, that we may *then* receive the *Crown*: we *fight now*, that we may then *triumph* in victory. The *Grave* hath no *work*: but *Heaven* hath *work*, and *Hell* hath *ſuffering*. There is no *Repentance unto life* hereafter: but there is *Repentance unto torment*, and to *deſperation*. There is no *Believing* of a *happineſs* unſeen in order to the *obtaining* of it: or of a *miſery unſeen* in order to the *eſcaping* of it; nor *believing in a Saviour* in order to *theſe ends*: But there is the *fruition* of the *happineſs* which was *here believed*; & *feeling* of the *miſery* that men would

not believe; and *suffering* from *him* as a *righteous Judge*, whom they rejected as a *merciful Saviour*. So that it is not *all work* that *ceaseth* at our *death*: but only the work of *this present life*.

And indeed no reason can *shew* us the *least probability* of doing our *work* when *our time* is done that was *given* us to do it in. If it can be done, it must be, 1. by the *recalling* of our *Time*; 2. by the *return of life*; 3. or by *opportunity* in *another life*: But there is no hope of any of these.

1. Who knoweth not that *Time cannot be recalled*? That which *once Was*, will be no more. *Yesterday* will never come again. *To day* is passing, and will not return. You may work while it is day: but when you have lost that *day*, it will not return for *you* to work in. While your *candle burneth*, *you* may make use of its light: but when it is *done*, it is too late to use it. No force of *Medicine*, no *Orators* elegant perswasions, no worldlings wealth, no Princes power, can call back

back one day or hour of time. If they could, what endeavours would there be uſed, when extremity hath taught them to *value* what they now deſpiſe? what *chaffering* would there be *at laſt*, if *time* could be *purchaſed*, for any thing that man can give. Then Miſers would bring out their wealth, and ſay, *All this will I give for one days time of Repentance more:* And Lords and Knights would lay down their Honours, and ſay, *Take all, and let us be the baſeſt Beggars, if we may but have one year of the Time that we miſpent!* Then Kings would lay down their Crowns, and ſay, *Let us be equal with the loweſt Subjects, ſo we may but have the Time again that we waſted in the Cares and Pleaſures of the world.* Kingdoms would then ſeem a *contemptible price* for the recovery of *Time*. The *Time* that is now *idled* & *talkt* away: The *Time* that is now *feaſted* and *complemented* away, that is unneceſſarily *ſported* & *ſlept* away; that is wickedly & preſumptuouſly

ſin'd away; how *precious* will it one day ſeem to all? How happy a bargain would they think that they had made, if at the deareſt rates they could redeem it? The prophaneſt Mariner fals a praying, when he *fears* his *Time* is at an end. If importunity would then prevail, how earneſtly would they pray for the recovery of *time*, that formerly derided praying, or minded it not, or could not have while, or mocked God with lip-ſervice, and cuſtomary forms, & feigned words inſtead of praying? what *a Liturgy* would death teach the trifling Time deſpiſing Gallants, the idle, buſie, dreaming-active, ambitious, covetous Lovers of this world, if *time* could be *intreated* to return! How paſſionately then would they roar out their requeſts! [*O that we might once ſee the dayes of Hope, and Means, and Mercy, which once we ſaw, and would not ſee! O that we had thoſe dayes to ſpend in penitential tears and prayers, and holy preparations for an endleſs*

endleſs life, which we ſpent at Cards, in needleſs recreations, in idle talk, in humouring others, in the pleaſing of our fleſh, or in the inordinate cares and buſineſſes of the world! O that our youthful vigour might return! that our years might be renewed! that the dayes we ſpent in vanity might be recalled! that Miniſters might again be ſent to us publickly and privately, with the meſſage of Grace which we once made light of! that the Sun would once more ſhine upon us! and patience & mercy would once more re-aſſume their work!] If cries or tears, or price or pains, would bring back loſt-abuſed Time, how happy were the now-diſtracted, dreaming, dead-hearted, and impenitent world! If it would then *ſerve their turn* to ſay to the vigilant *believers* [*Give us of your oyl, for our lamps are gone out*] or to cry [*Lord, Lord, open to us*] when the door is ſhut, the *fooliſh* would be ſaved as well as the *wiſe*. *Mat.* 25. 8, 10, 11. But *this is the day of Salvation! this is the accepted Time*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2.

While it is called *To day*, hearken, and harden not your hearts, *Pſal.*95. 8. Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ſtand up from thy ſloathful wilful death, and uſe the light that's afforded thee by Chriſt, *Epheſ.*5. 14. or elſe the everlaſting utter darkneſs will ſhortly end thy *Time* and *Hope*.

2. And as *Time* can *never be recalled*, ſo *Life* ſhall never be here *reſtored*: *Job* 14. 14. [If a man die, ſhall he live (here) again? *All the dayes of our appointed time we muſt therefore wait* (in faith and diligence) *till our change ſhall come*] One Life is appointed us on earth, to diſpatch the work that our everlaſting life dependeth on: And we ſhall have but *One*. Loſe that and all is loſt for ever: *Yet* you may *hear*, and *read*, and *learn*, and *pray*: but when *this Life* is ended, it ſhall be ſo no more. You ſhall riſe from the dead indeed to *Judgement*, and to the Life that now *you* are preparing for, but never to ſuch a Life *as this on earth*: your life is as the fighting

fighting of a Battel, that must be won or lost at once. There is no coming hither again to mend what is done amiss. Oversights must be presently corrected by Repentance, or else they are everlastingly past remedy. *Now* if you be not truly converted, you *may be*: If you find that you are carnal & miserable, you may be healed: If you are unpardoned, you may be pardoned: If you are Enemies, you may be reconciled to God: But when once the thread of life is cut, your opportunities are at an end. Now you may enquire of your Friends and Teachers, what a poor soul must do that he may be saved, and you may receive particular instructions and exhortations, and *God* may bless them to the illuminating, renewing and saving of your souls: But when life is past, it will be so no more. O then, if desperate souls might but return, and once more be tryed with the means of life, what joyful tidings would it be! How welcome

welcome would the Messenger be that bringeth it! Had *Hell* but such an offer as this, and would *any cryes* procure it from their righteous Judge, O what a change would be among them! How importunately would they cry to God, [O send us once again unto the earth? Once more let us see the face of Mercy, and hear the tenders of Christ & of Salvation? Once more let the Ministers offer us their helps, and teach us in season and out of season, in publick and in private, and we will refuse their help and exhortation no more, we will hate them, and drive them away from our Houses & Towns no more: Once more let us have thy Word and Ordinances, and try whether we will not believe them, and use them better then we did: Once more let us have the help and company of thy Saints, and we will scorn them, and abuse them, and persecute them no more. O for the great unvaluable Mercy of such a Life as once

we

we had! O try us once more with such a Life, and see whether we will not contemn the world, and cloze with Christ, and live as strictly, and pray as earnestly, as *those* that we hated and abused for so doing: O that we might once *more* be admitted into the holy Assemblies, and have the Lords Days to spend in the business of our Salvation! We would plead no more against the power & purity of the Ordinances; We would no more call that *day* a burden, nor *hate* them that spent it in works of Holiness, nor plead for the liberty of the flesh therein.

I makes my heart even shake within me, to think with what cries those *damned souls* would strive with God, and how they would roar out [*O try us once again,*] if they had but the *least* encouragement of *Hope*! But it *will not be, It must not be!* They *had* their *Day*, and would not know it: They cannot *lose* their *time*, and *have* it. They had faithful Guides, and would

would not follow them: Teachers they had, but would not learn. The dust of their feet must witness against them, because their entertained obeyed message, cannot witness for them. Long did Christ wait with the patient tenders of his blood and spirit; His Grace was long and earnestly offered, but could not be regarded and received: And they cannot finally refuse a Christ, and yet have a Christ; Or refuse his mercy, and yet be saved by it. He that would have *Lazarus* sent from the *dead*, to *warn* his unbelieving *Brethren* on Earth, no *doubt* would have strongly purposed *himself* on a reformation, if he might *once more* have been tried: And how earnestly would he have beg'd for such a *Trial*, that beg'd so hard for a drop of water? *Luk.* 16. 24, 27, 28. But alas, such mouths must be stopt for ever with a [*Remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things*] vers. 25.

So that *it is appointed for all men once*

to

to dye, and after that the Judgement, Heb. 9. 27. But there's no return to earth again: The places of your abode, imployment and delight, ſhall know you no more. You muſt ſee theſe faces of your friends, and converſe in fleſh with men no more! *This* world, *theſe* houſes, *that* wealth and honour, as to any fruition, muſt be to you as if you had never known them. You muſt aſſemble here but a little while! yet a little longer, and we muſt preach, and you muſt hear it no more for ever. That therefore which you will do, muſt *preſently* be done, or it will be too late. If *ever* you will Repent and Believe, it muſt be *Now*. If *ever* you will be converted and ſanctified it muſt be *Now*. If *ever* you will be pardoned & reconciled to God, it muſt be *Now*. If *ever* you will reign, its now that you muſt fight and conquer. O that you were wiſe, that you underſtood this, and that you would conſider your latter end, *Deut*. 32. 29. And that you

you would let thoſe words *ſink down* into *your hearts*, which *came* from the *heart* of the Redeemer, as was witneſſed by his tears, *Luke* 19. 41, 42. [*If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace. But now they are hidden from thine eyes.*] And that theſe warnings may not be the leſs regarded, becauſe you have ſo *often* heard *them*, when often hearing increaſeth your obligation, and diminiſheth not the truth, or your danger.

3. And as there is no *Return* to *Earth*, ſo is there no doing *this work* hereafter. Heaven and Hell are for *other work*. If the Infant be *dead born*, the *open* world will not *revive* him; That which is generated, and born a *beaſt*, or *ſerpent*, will not by all the influences of the Heavens, or all the powers of Sun or Earth, become a *Man*. The *ſecond* and *third* concoxion preſuppoſe the *firſt*; The *harveſt* doth preſuppoſe the *ſeed time*, & the labour of the husbandman. Its *now* that

that you muſt *ſow*, and *hereafter* that you muſt *reap*. Its *now* that you muſt *work*, and then that you muſt receive your *wages*.

Is this believed and conſidered by the ſleepy world? Alas ſirs, do you live as men that muſt live here no more? Do your work as men that muſt work no more, and pray as men that muſt pray no more, when once the time of work is ended? What thinkeſt thou, poor beſotted ſinner! will God command *the Sun to ſtand ſtill*, while thou rebelleſt or forgetteſt *thy work* and him? Doſt thou look he ſhould pervert the courſe of *nature*, & continue the ſpring and ſeed-time till thou haſt a *mind* to *ſow*? or that he will return the *dead-born* or miſſhapen Infant into the womb, that it may be better formed or *quickned*? Will he renew thy age, and make the young again, and call back the hours that thou prodigally waſtedſt on thy luſts and idleneſs? Canſt thou look for this at the hand of God,

when

when Nature and Scripture assure thee of the contrary? If not, why hast thou not yet done with thy beloved sins? Why hast thou not yet begun to live? Why sittest thou still, while thy soul is un-renewed? and all thy preparation for death and judgement is yet to make? How fain would Satan find thee thus at death? How fain would he have leave to *blow* out thy candle, before thou hast entred in the way of life? Dost thou look to have Preachers sent after thee, to bring thee the mercy which thy contempt here left behind? Wilt thou hear and be converted in the Grave and Hell? or wilt thou be saved without holiness? that is, In despight of God that hath resolved. it *shall not be*. O ye *sons of sleep*, of *death*, of *darkness*, *awake*, and *live*, and *hear the Lord*, before the Grave and Hell have shut their mouths upon you! *Hear now*, least hearing be too late! *Hear now*, if you will *ever* hear. *Hear now*, if you *have ears to hear*! And O

ye

ye ſons of *Light*, that ſee what ſleeping ſinners ſee not, call to them, and ring *them* ſuch a *peal* of lamentations, tears and compaſſionate intreaties, as is ſuited to ſuch a dead and doleful ſtate; Who knows but God may bleſs it to awake them?

If any of *you* be ſo far awakened, as to ask me what I am calling you to do; My Text tells you in general, Up and be Doing: Look about you, and ſee what you have to do, and Do it with your might.

1. [Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do] That is, whatſoever is a Duty impoſed by the Lord, whatſoever is a Means conducing to thy own or others welfare; Whatſoever *Neceſſity calleth* thee to do, and *Opportunity alloweth* thee to do.

[*Thy hand findeth*] that is, Thy executive powers by the conduct of thy underſtanding, is now to do.

[*Do it with thy Might*: Do thy beſt in it. 1. *Trifle not*, but do it *preſently*, without *unneceſſary Delay*. 2. Do it

Re-

Resolutely: Remain not *doubtful, unresolved*, in suspense, as if it were yet a *question* with thee whether thou shouldest do it, or not.

3. Do it with thy most *awakned affections*, and serious intention of the powers of thy soul. *Sleepiness* and *insensibility* are most unsuitable to such works. It is a *peculiar people zealous of good works*, that Christ hath purchased to himself, *Tit.* 2. 14.

4. Do it with all *necessary forecast* and contrivance: Not with a *distracting, hindering Care*; but with such a Care as may shew that you despise not your Master, and are *not* regardless of his *work*: And with such a care as is suited to the difficulties & nature of the thing, and as is necessary to the due accomplishment.

5. Do it not sloathfully, but vigorously and with diligence. Stick not at thy labour: Lest thou hear [*Thou wicked and slothful servant*, Mat. 25. 26. *Hide not thy hand in thy bosom with the sloathful*, & say not, *There is a Li-*

on

on in the way, Prov. 26. 13, 14. The *negligent* and the *vicious*, the *waster* and the *ſloathful*, differ but as *one brother* from *another*, Prov. 18. 9. As the *ſelf-murder* of the wilfully ungodly, ſo alſo the deſire of the *ſloathful* killeth him, becauſe his hands refuſe to labour, *Prov.* 21. 25. The ſoul of the ſluggard *deſireth*, & hath *nothing*; but the ſoul of the *diligent* ſhall be made fat, *Prov.* 13 4. *Be not ſloathful in buſineſs, but be fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord*, Rom. 12. 11.

6. Do it with *Conſtancy*, & not with deſtructive pawſes and intermiſſions, or with wearineſs and turning back. *The righteous ſhall hold on his way: and he that is of clean hands ſhall be ſtronger and ſtronger*, Job 17. 9. *Be ſtedfaſt, unmovable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord foraſmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Be not weary of well-doing: for in due ſeaſon we ſhall reap, if we faint not*, Gal. 6. 9. Theſe ſix particulars are neceſſary, if you will obſerve

ſerve the precept in my Text.

But that miſunderſtanding hinder not the performance, I ſhall acquaint you further with the ſenſe, by theſe few explicatory cautions.

1. The *Might* and *Diligence* here required, excludeth not the neceſſity of *Deliberation* and *Prudent* conduct. Otherwiſe, the *faſter* you go, the *further* you may go out of the way; and miſ-guided zeal may ſpoil all the work, and make it but an injury to others or your ſelves. A little imprudence in the ſeaſon, and order and manner of a Duty, ſometimes may ſpoil it, and hinder the ſucceſs, & make it do more hurt then good. How many a Sermon, or Prayer, or reproof, is made the matter of deriſion, and contempt, for ſome imprudent paſſages or deportment? God ſendeth not his ſervants to be *jeſters* of the world, or to play the *mad-men*, as *David* in his fears: We muſt be *wiſe* and *innocent*, as well as *reſolute* and *valiant*: Though *fleſhly and worldly*

ly wiſdom be not deſirable, as being but *fooliſhneſs* with God; yet the *wiſdom which is from above, & is firſt pure, and then peaceable*, and is acquainted with the high and hidden myſteries, and is *juſtified of her children*, muſt be the *Guide* of all our holy actions. Holineſs is not *blind*: *Illumination* is the firſt part of Sanctification. Believers are *Children of the light*. Nothing requireth ſo much *wiſdom* as the matters of God, and of our Salvation. Folly is moſt unſuitable to ſuch excellent imployments, and moſt unbeſeeming the ſons of the moſt High. It is a *ſpirit of wiſdom* that animateth all the Saints, 1 *Cor.* 3. 19. & 2. 6, 7. *Epheſ.* 1. 8, 17. *Col.* 3. 16. It is the *treaſures of wiſdom* that dwell in Chriſt, & are communicated to his members, *Col.* 2. 3. We muſt *walk in wiſdom toward them that are without*, Col. 4. 5. And our *works* muſt be *ſhewn out of a good Converſation, with meekneſs of wiſdom*, Jam. 3. 13. Yet I muſt needs ſay, that its *more* in *great*

things

things then in *ſmall*, in the *ſubſtance* then the *circumſtances*; in a *ſound judgement* and *eſtimate* of things, and ſuitable choire & proſecution, then in *fine expreſſions*, or *deportment* anſwering proud mens expectations.

2. Though you muſt *work* with your *might*, yet with a *diverſity* agreeable to the quality of your ſeveral works. Some works muſt be preferred before others: All cannot be done at once. Thats *a ſin* out of ſeaſon, which in ſeaſon is a *duty*. The *greateſt*, & the *moſt urgent* work muſt be preferred. And *ſome works* muſt be done with *double fervour* & reſolution, and ſome with *leſs*. Buying, and ſelling, and marrying, and poſſeſſing, and uſing the world, muſt be done with a fear of *over-doing*, and in a ſort *as if we did them not*, though *they* alſo muſt have a neceſſary *diligence*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31. *Gods Kingdom* and its *Righteouſneſs* muſt be *firſt ſought*, Mat. 6. 33. And our *labour for the meat that periſheth*, muſt be comparatively as *none*, John 6. 27.

3. Laſtly,

3. Lastly, it is not *an irregular*, nor a *self-disturbing, vexatious violence* that is required of us: but a sweet well-setled resolution, and a delightful expeditious diligence, that makes the wheels go merrily on, and the more easily get over those rubs and difficulties, that clog and stop a sloathful soul.

And now will you lend me the *assistance* of your *Consciences*, for the transcribing of this *command* of God upon your hearts, and taking out a Copy of this order, for the regulating of your lives? [*Whatsoever*] is not a word *so comprehensive* as to include any *vanity* or *sin*; but *so comprehensive* as to include *all your Duty*.

1. (To begin with the *lowest*;) The very works of *your bodily callings*, must have *diligence*. *In the sweat of your brows you must eat your bread*, Gen. 3. 19. *Six dayes shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do*, Exod. 20. 9. *He that will not work, let him not eat*, 2 Thess. 3. 10. *Disorderly walkers, busie-bodies, that wil not work with quietness*,

etneſs, and eat their own bread, are to be *avoided* & *ſhamed* by the Church, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 6, 11, 12, 14. *Lazy ſervants* are unfaithful to men, and diſobedient to God, who commandeth them to *obey their Maſters according to the fleſh* (unbelieving, ungodly Maſters) *in all things* (that concerns their ſervice) *and that not with eye-ſervice as man-pleaſers, but in ſingleneſs of heart, and in the fear of God, doing whatſoever they do as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord* (even for this) *they ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance*, Col. 3. 22, 23, 24. *But he that doth wrong* (by ſloathfulneſs, or unfaithfulneſs) *ſhall receive for the wrong which he hath done*, verſ. 25.

Succeſs is Gods ordinary temporal reward of *diligence*, *Prov.* 10. 4 & 12. 24, 27. And diſeaſes, poverty, ſhame, diſappointment, or ſelf-tormenting melancholy, are his uſual puniſhments of ſloath. *Hard labour* redeemeth *Time*: you will have the more to lay *out* on *greater works*: The *ſloathful* is ſtill *behindhand*, & therefore muſt leave

leave much of his work undone.

2. Are you *Parents* or *Governours* of *Families*! you have *work to do* for *God*, and for *your childrens and ſervants ſouls*: *Do it with your might*: Deal *wiſely*, but *ſeriouſly* & *frequently* with them about their ſin, their duty, and their hopes of Heaven; Tell them *whither* they are going, and *which way* they muſt go: Make them underſtand that they have a *higher Father* and *Maſter* that muſt be firſt ſerved, and *greater* work to do then *yours*. *Waken* them from their natural *inſenſibility* and *ſloath*: Turn not all *your family duties* into *lifeleſs cuſtomary form* (whether *extemporate*, or by *rote*) ſpeak about God, & Heaven, and Hell, and Holineſs, with that ſeriouſneſs as beſeems *men* that *believe* what they ſay, and would have thoſe they ſpeak to, to believe it. Talk not either drowſily, or lightly, or jeaſtingly of ſuch dreadful, or joyful, unexpreſſible things. Remember, that *your families* and *you*, are going to the grave, and to the world

where there is no more room for your exhortations. There is no *Catechising, examining*, or *serious instructing* them in the *grave* whither *they* and you are going. *It must be now or never: And therefore do it with your might.* The *words of God* must be *in your hearts*, and you *must diligently teach them to your children, talking of them when you sit in your houses, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up*, Deut. 6. 6, 7, 8. & 11. 18, 19, 20.

3. Have you *ignorant* or *ungodly neighbors*, whose misery calls for your compassion, and relief? Speak to them and help them with *prudent diligence.* Lose not your opportunities: Stay not till *Death* hath stopt your *mouths*, or stopt their *ears.* Stay not till they are out of hearing, and taken from your converse. Stay not till they are *in Hell*, before you warn them *of it*, or till Heaven be lost, before you have seriously called to them to remember it. Go to their houses: take all opportunities: stoop

to

to their infirmities: bear with unthankful frowardneſs: It is *for mens ſalvation.* Remember there is no place for *your* inſtructions or exhortations in the *Grave* or *Hell. Your duſt* cannot ſpeak, and *their duſt* cannot hear: Up therefore and be doing with all your might.

4. Hath God intruſted you with the *Riches of this world*; with *many* talents or with *few*, by which he looketh you ſhould relieve the needy, and eſpecially ſhould promote thoſe works of *piety* which are the greateſt *charity? Give* (prudently, but willingly and liberally) while you have to give. It is *your Gain*: The time of *market* for your ſouls: and of *laying up a treaſure in Heaven*; and ſetting your money to the moſt gainful Uſury: *and* of *making you friends of the mammon of unrighteouſneſs*; & *furthering* your ſalvation, by that which *hindereth* other mens, & occaſioneth their perdition. [*As you have opportunity, do good to all men, but eſpecially to them of the houſhold of faith*] Gal. 6. 6, 7, 8,

7, 8, 9, 12. [*Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many dayes. Give a portion to seven and to eight; for thou knowest not what evil may be upon the earth*] Eccles. 11.1,2. [*In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good*] v. 6. [*Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it: say not to thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee*] Prov. 3. 27,28. *Lay up a foundation for the time to come: do good before thy heart be hardened, thy riches blasted & consumed, thy opportunities taken away; part with it before it part with thee.* Remember, it must be *Now or Never*: There is no working in the Grave.

5. Hath God intrusted you with *Power* or *Interest*, by which you may promote his honour in the world, & relieve the oppressed, & restrain the rage of *impious malice*? Hath he made you *Governours*, and put the sword of

Justice

Juſtice into your hands? up then, and be doing with your might. Defend the innocent, protect the ſervants of the *Lord*, cheriſh them that do well, be a terror to the wicked, encourage the *ſtricteſt obedience* to the univerſal Governor, diſcountenance the *breakers* of his Laws: Look not to be reverenced or obeyed *before him*, or more carefully then *he*: openly maintain his Truth and worſhip without fear or ſhame: Deal gently and tenderly with his lambs and little ones: Search after vice that you may ſucceſsfully *ſuppreſs* it. Hate thoſe temptations that would draw *you* to man-pleaſing, temporizing, remiſneſs, or *countenancing* ſin; but eſpecially thoſe that would enſnare *you* in a *controverſie with Heaven*, & in quarrels againſt *the ways of Holineſs*; or in that *ſelf-confounding* ſin of abuſing and oppoſing the people that are moſt careful to pleaſe the Lord. Your truſt is great, & ſo is your advantage to do good; And how great will be your account, & how dreadful, if you be unfaith-

ful? As you *ſignifie* more then hundreds or thouſands of the meaner ſort, and your actions do *moſt good* or *hurt*; ſo you muſt expect to be accordingly *dealt with*, when you come to the impartial, final judgement. Befriend the Goſpel as the Charter of your everlaſting priviledges; *Own thoſe* that *Chriſt* hath told you *he will own*. Uſe them as men that are ready to hear, [*Inaſmuch as you did it to one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, you did it unto me*] Mat. 25. *Know not a wicked perſon*: but let *your eyes be on the faithful of the land, that they may dwel therein, and lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlineſs and honeſty*, Pſal. 101. 1 Tim. 2. 2. [*Let thoſe that work the work of the Lord, be with you without fear*] 1 Cor. 16. 10. Remember that it is the Character of a *Phariſee* and *Hypocrite*, to ſee the *mote of the non-obſervance of a Ceremony, or tradition, or ſmaller matter* of difference in Religion, in *their Brothers eye*, and not to ſee the beam of *hypocriſie*, *injuſtice*, and *malicious cruel oppoſition* of Chriſt

and

and his Diſciples, in their *own eyes*: And that its the brand of them that *pleaſe not God*, that are *filling up their ſins*, *on* whom *Gods wrath* is coming *to the utmoſt*, to *perſecute the ſervants of the Lord*, *forbidding them to Preach to the people that they might be ſaved*, 1 Theſſ. 2. 15, 16.

Learn well the *ſecond*, and the *hundred and firſt* Pſalm: And *write* theſe ſentences on your *walls* and *doors*, as an Antidote *againſt* that ſelf-undoing ſin: Mat. 18. 6. *Whoſoever ſhall offend one of theſe little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a milſtone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea.*] Zach. 2. 8. [*He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*] Rom. 14. 1, 2. and 15. 1. [*Him that is weak in the faith, receive you: but not to doubtful diſputations. -----For God hath received him*] Mat. 10. 40, 41, 42. [*He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me. He that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous*

man, ſhall receive a righteous mans reward: And whoſo ſhall give to drink to one of theſe little ones, a cup of cold water only in the name of a Diſciple, Verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall in no wiſe loſe his reward.] If you love not the *Godly*, love *your ſelves* (ſo far as to ſuch ſelf-love is poſſible) wound not your *own hearts*, to make their *fingers bleed*. *Damn not* your *ſouls*, (and that by the *ſureſt, neareſt way*) that you may hurt *their bodies*. Provoke not God to *thruſt you* from his preſence, and deny your ſuits, by your *dealing ſo with them*: ſtop not your *own mouths*, when your miſery will beſpeak your lowdeſt cryes for mercy by your ſtopping the mouths of the ſervants of the Lord, and refuſing to hear their requeſts for juſtice. If you have the Serpents enmity againſt the womans ſeed, you muſt expect the Serpents doom: *Your heads will be bruiſed*, when you have *bruiſed their heels*, Gen. 3. 15. *Kick not againſt the pricks*, Acts 9. Let not *bryars and thorns ſet themſelves*

ſelves in battel againſt the Lord, leſt he go therefore through them, & burn them together, Iſa. 27. 4.

I ſpeak not any of this by way of *accuſation*, or *diſhonorable reflexion* on the *Magiſtrate*. Bleſſed be God that hath *given* us the comfort of *your defence*. But knowing what the Tempter aimeth at, and where it is that your danger lieth, & by what means the rulers of the earth *have* been undone, faithfulneſs commandeth me to tell you of the *ſnare*, and to ſet before you *good* & *evil*, as ever I would eſcape the guilt of betraying *you* by flattery, or cruel and cowardly ſilence.

And eſpecially when your *Magiſtracy* is but *annual*, or *for a ſhort time*, it concerneth you to be *doing with your might*. *It is* but *this year*, or ſhort ſpace of time, that you have to do this ſpecial ſervice in; Loſe *this* and loſe *all*. By what men on earth ſhould God be eminently ſerved & honoured, if not by Magiſtrates, whom he hath eminently advanced,

impowred, and intruſted? With conſiderate foreſight, ſeriouſly ask your ſelves the queſtion, Are you willing to hear, at the day of your accounts, that you had but *one year*, or a *few*, to do God *ſpecial ſervice in*, and that you *knew this*, and yet *would not do it?* Can your hearts bear it then, to hear and think, that you *loſt*, & *wilfully loſt* ſuch an opportunity? Look about you then, and ſee what is to be done. Are there not *Ale-houſes* to be ſuppreſt, and *drunkards* & riotous perſons to be reſtrained; Preaching and Piety to be *promoted? Do it with your might*: For it muſt be *Now or Never.*

6. To *come* yet a little nearer you, and ſpeak of the work that is yet to be done in your *own ſouls*; Are any of *you* yet in the *ſtate of unrenewed nature*, born *only* of the *fleſh*, and not of the *Spirit*, Joh. 3. 3, 5, 6. *minding the things of the fleſh, and not the things of the Spirit?* Rom. 8. 1, 5, 7, 9, 13. & conſequently yet in the *power of Satan, taken captive by him at his will*,

will, Act. 26. 18. 2 Tim. 2. 26, 27. *Up and be doing*, if thou love thy soul. If thou care whether thou *be* in *Joy* or *misery for ever*, bewail thy sin and spiritual distress: Make out to Christ, cry mightily to *him* for his renewing and reconciling pardoning grace: plead his satisfaction, his merits & his promises: Away with thy rebellion, & thy beloved sin; Deliver up thy soul entirely to Christ, to be sanctified, governed and saved by him. Make no more demurs about it; it is not a matter to be questioned, or trifled in. Let the *earth* be acquainted with thy *bended knees*, and the *air* with thy *complaints* and *cries*, & men with thy *confessions* and *enquiries* after the way of life; and *heaven* with thy sorrows, desires and resolutions, till thy *soul* be *acquainted* with *the Spirit of Christ*, (Rom. 8. 9.) and with the *new*, the *holy* and *heavenly nature*; and thy *heart* have received the *transcript of Gods Law*, the *impress* of the *Gospel*, and so the *Image* of thy *Creator* and *Redeemer*.

Ply

Ply this work with *all thy might*: For there is no *Converſion*, *Renovation*, or *Repentance unto life* in the *grave* whither thou goeſt. It muſt be *Now*, or *Never*. And *Never ſaved*, if *Never ſanctified*, Heb. 12. 14.

7. Haſt thou any *prevailing ſin* to *mortifie*, that either *reigneth* in thee, or woundeth thee and keepeth thy ſoul in darkneſs and unacquaintedneſs with God? Aſſault it reſolutely, Reject it ſpeedily: Abhor the motions of it: Turn away from the perſons or things that would entice thee. Hate the *doors* of the Harlot, and of the Alehouſe, or the gaming houſe: and go not as the *Ox to the ſlaughter*, and as a *bird to the fowlers ſnare*, and as a *fool to the correction of the ſtocks*, as if thou *knoweſt not that it is for thy life*,] Prov. 7. 22, 23. Why thou befooled ſtupid ſoul! *wilt* thou be *taſting* of the poyſoned cup? *wilt* thou be *glutting* thee with the *bait*? Haſt thou *no where* to *walk* or *play thee*, but at the brink of Hell? *Muſt not the fleſh be crucified with its affecti-*

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ons and lusts? Gal. 5. 24. *Must* it not be *tamed* and *mortified*, or thy soul condemned? *Rom.* 8. 13. 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. *Run not therefore as at uncertainty: fight not as one that beats the air*, ver. 26. seeing this *must* be done, or thou art undone, delay and dally with sin no longer: Let this be the day: resolve, and resist it with thy might: It must be *Now* or *Never*; when death comes, it is too late. It will be then no reward to leave thy sinne, which thou canst keep no longer: No part of Holiness or happiness, that thou art not drunk, or proud, or lustful in the grave or hell. As thou art wise therefore *know* and *take* thy *Time*.

8. Art thou in a *declined lapsed state*? decayed in grace? Hast thou lost thy first desires and love? do thy *first works*, and do them *with thy might*. Delay not, but remember from whence thou art fallen, and what thou hast lost by it, and into how sad a case thy folly and negligence hath brought thee: say, *I will go and return to my first husband*; for then

then was it better with me then now, Hoſ. 2. 7. Cry out with *Job* 29. 2, 3. 4, 5. [*O that I were as in moneths paſt! as in the dayes when God preſerved me! when his candle ſhined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkneſs. As I was in the dayes of my youth, when the ſecret of God was on my Tabernacle, when the Almighty was yet with me.*-------] *Return* while thou *haſt day*, leſt the *night ſurprize* thee: Loyter and delay no more; thou haſt loſt by it already: thou *art* far behind hand. Beſtir thee therefore with all thy *Might*.

9. Art thou in the *darkneſſe of uncertainty* concerning *thy converſion*, and thy *everlaſting ſtate*? Doſt thou not *know* whether thou be in a ſtate of life or death? and what ſhould become of thee, if *this were the day* or *hour* of thy change? If thou art *careful about it*, and *enquireſt*, and *uſeſt the means* that God hath appointed thee for aſſurance: I have then no more to ſay to thee now, but

but, *wait* on God, and thou ſhalt not be diſappointed or aſhamed! Thou ſhalt have aſſurance in due time, or be ſaved before thou wouldſt believe thou ſhould be ſaved. Be patient and obedient, and the light of Chriſt will ſhine upon thee, and yet thou ſhalt ſee the days of peace. But if thou art *careleſs* in thy *uncertainty*, and mindeſt not ſo great a buſineſs, be awakened and call thy ſoul to its account; Search and examine thy heart and life: Read, and conſider, and take advice of faithful Guides. Canſt thou careleſly ſleep, and laugh, and ſport, and follow thy leſſer buſineſs as if thy Salvation were made ſure, when thou knoweſt not *where* thou muſt *dwell for ever? Examine your ſelves whether you be in the faith; prove your ſelves; know ye not your own ſelves, that Chriſt is in you except you are reprobates?* 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Give all diligence* (in time) *to make your calling and election ſure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. In the *Grave* and

and *Hell* there is no making ſure of Heaven: you are then paſt enquiries and ſelf-examinations, in order to any recovery or *hope*. Another kind of tryal will finally *reſolve you*. Up therefore and diligently ply the *work*: it muſt be *Now* or *Never*.

10. In all the *duties* of thy *Profeſſion* of *Piety*, *Juſtice*, or *Charity*, to *God*, *thy ſelf*, or *others*, *up and be doing with thy might*. Art thou ſeeking to inflame thy ſoul with *love* to God? plunge thy ſelf in the Ocean of his *love*; admire his mercies; gaze upon the repreſentations of his tranſcendent goodneſs; *O taſte and ſee that the Lord is gracious!* Remember that he muſt be *loved with all thy heart, and ſoul and might*, canſt thou pour out thy love upon a creature, and give but a few barren drops to God?

When thou art *Fearing him*, let his *Fear command* thy ſoul, and conquer all the fear of man.

When thou art *Truſting him*, do it.

it without diſtruſt, and caſt all thy eare and thy ſelf upon him: Truſt him as a creature ſhould truſt his God, and the members of Chriſt ſhould truſt their Head and dear Redeemer.

When thou art making mention of his great and dreadful *name*, O do it with *Reverence*, and *awe*, and *admiration*: And *take not the name of God in vain*.

When thou art *Reading his Word*, let the Majeſty of the Author, and the greatneſs of the matter, and the Gravity of the ſtile, poſſeſs thee with an obedientiall fear. Love it, and let it be ſweeter to thee then the honey-comb, and precionſer then thouſands of Gold and Silver. Reſolve to do what there thou findeſt to be the will of God. When thou art *praying in ſecret*, or in thy *family*, *Do it with thy might*: Cry mightily to God, as a ſoul under ſin, and wants, and danger, that is ſtepping into an endleſs life, ſhould do. Let the reverence and the fer-

fervour of thy prayers ſhew that its *God himſelf* that thou art ſpeaking to: that its *Heaven it ſelf* that thou art praying for; *Hell it ſelf* that thou art praying to be ſaved from. Wilt thou be dull and ſenſleſs on *ſuch an errand* to the *Living God?* Remember what lieth upon *thy failing or prevailing*: and that it muſt be *Now* or *Never.*

Art thou a *Preacher of the Goſpel*, and takeſt charge of the *ſouls of men? Take heed to thy ſelf and to the whole flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made thee an Overſeer, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood.* Let not the blood of ſouls, and the blood that purchaſed them, be required at thy hands, *Acts* 20. 28. *Ezek.* 3. 18, 20. Thou *art charged before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom, that thou preach the Word, be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke,*

and

and exhort, with all long-ſuffering and doctrine, 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *Teach every man, and exhort every man*, Col. 1. 28. *Even night and day with tears*, Acts 20. 31. *Save men with fear, pulling them out of the fire*, Jud. *Cry aloud: lift up thy voice like a trumpet; tell them of their tranſgreſſions*, Iſa. 58. 1. *Yet thou* art *alive*, and *they alive*: yet thou haſt a tongue, and they have ears: The final ſentence hath not yet cut off their hopes. Preach therefore, and *Preach with all thy Might*. Exhort them privately and perſonally with all the *ſerioufneſs* thou canſt. Quickly, or it will be *too late*. Prudently, or Satan will *over-reach thee*: Fervently, or thy words are like to be diſregarded: Remember when thou lookeſt them in the faces, when thou beholdeſt the Aſſemblies, that They muſt be *Converted* or *Condemned*; *ſanctified* on *Earth*, or *tormented* in *Hell*; and that *this is the Day*, It muſt be *Now* or *Never*.

In a word, Apply this *quickening* pre-

precept to *all the duties* of thy Chriſtian courſe. Be *Religious* and *Juſt*, and *Charitable* in *good ſadneſs*, if you would be taken for ſuch when you look for the reward. *Work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate; for many ſhall ſeek to enter and ſhall not be able*, Mat. 7. 13. Luk. 12. 24. *Many run, but few receive the prize: ſo run that you may obtain*, 1 Cor. 9. 24. *If the Righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear?* 1 Pet. 4. 18. Let the doting world deride your diligence, and ſet themſelves to hinder and afflict you: It will be but a little while before experience change their minds, and make them ſing another ſong. Follow Chriſt fully: Ply your work, and loſe no time. The Judge is coming. Let not words nor any thing that man can do, prevail with you to ſit down, or ſtop you in a journey of ſuch importance. Pleaſe God, though fleſh, and friends,

and

and all the world ſhould be diſpleaſed. Whatever come of your reputation, or Eſtates, or Liberties, or Lives, be ſure you look to Life Eternal, and caſt not that on any hazard, for a withering flower, or a pleaſant dream, or a picture of commodity, or any vanity that the Deceiver can preſent. *For what ſhall it profit you to win the world, and loſe your ſoul?* Mat. 16. 26. Or to have been honoured and obeyed on earth, when you are under the wrath of God in Hell? Or that your fleſh was once provided with variety of delights, when its turned to rottenneſs, and muſt be raiſed to torments? Hold on therefore in Faith, and Holineſs, and Hope, though Earth and Hell ſhould rage againſt you; though all the world by force or flattery, ſhould do the worſt they can to hinder you: This is your trial: your warfare, is the reſiſting of deceit, and of all that would tempt you to conſent to the means of your own deſtruction:

con-

conſent not, and you conquer: conquer, and you are crowned. The combat is all about your Wills; Yield, and you have loſt the day. If the prating of ungodly fools, or the contemptuous jears of hardned ſinners, or the frowns of unſanctified Superiours could prevail againſt the Spirit of Chriſt, and the workings of an enlightened mind, then what man would be ſaved? You deſerve damnation, if you will run into it to avoid a mock, or the loſs of any thing that man can take from you. You are unmeet for Heaven if you can part with it to ſave your purſes. *Fear not them that can kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do: but fear him that can deſtroy both ſoul and body in Hell*, Mat. 10. 28. Luk. 12. 4, 5. Obey God, though all the world forbid you. No power can ſave you from his Juſtice: And none of them can deprive you of his Reward. Though you loſe your Heads, you ſhall ſave your Crowns: You no way ſave your lives ſo certainly

tainly, as by ſuch loſing them, *Mat.* 10. 39. *One thing is neceſſary*: Do that with ſpeed, and care, and diligence, which *Muſt* be done, or you are loſt for ever. They that are now againſt your much and earneſt praying, will ſhortly cry as loud themſelves in vain; When it is too late, how fervently will they beg for mercy, that now deride you for valuing & ſeeking it in time! But *then they ſhall call upon God but he will not anſwer: they ſhall ſeek him early, but ſhall not find him: For that they hated knowledge, and did not chooſe the fear of the Lord: They would none of his counſel, but diſpiſed all his reproof.*] Prov. 1. 24. to the end.

Up therefore & work with all thy *might*. Let *unbelievers trifle*, that know not that the righteous God ſtands over them, and know not that they are *now* to work for everlaſting, and know not that *Heaven* or *Hell* is at the end. Let them delay, & laugh, & play, & dream away their Time, that are drunk with proſperity, and mad

with fleſhly luſts and pleaſures, and have loſt their reaſon in the cares, and deluſions, and vain glory of the world. But ſhall it be ſo with thee whoſe eyes are opened, who ſeeſt the God, the Heaven, the Hell, which they *do but hear of* as unlikely things? Wilt thou *live awake*, as they that *are aſleep*? Wilt *thou do* in the *day-light*, as they *do* in the *dark*? ſhall *Freemen* live as *Satans ſlaves*? ſhall the *living lie as ſtill & uſeleſs* as *the dead*? Work then while it is *day*, for the *night* is *coming* when none can work, *John* 9. 4.

It is not the works of the *Moſaical* Law, nor works that are conceited for their proper *value* to deſerve any thing at the hands of God, that I am all this while perſwading you to: But it is the works preſcribed you by Chriſt in the Goſpel, according to which *you* ſhall be ſhortly judged to *joy* or *miſery* by Chriſt himſelf, that will call you to account These muſt be done with all your *Might*.

Object. But (you'l ſay perhaps) alas, *what Might have we? We have*

no ſufficiency of our ſelves; without Chriſt we can do nothing! And this we find when it comes to the trial.

Anſ. 1. It is not a *might* that is *Originally thine Own*, that I am calling thee to exerciſe: but that which thou haſt *already* received from *God*, and that which *he is ready* to beſtow. Uſe well but all the *Might* thou haſt, and thou ſhalt find thy labour is not in vain. Even the *ſtrength* of *nature*, and of *common Grace*, are Talents which thou muſt improve.

2. Art thou *willing* to uſe the *Might* thou haſt, and to have more, and *uſe it if thou hadſt it*? If thou *art*, thou haſt then the ſtrength of Chriſt: Thou ſtandeſt not, and workeſt not by thy own ſtrength: His promiſe is engaged to thee, and his ſtrength is ſufficient for thee. But if thou art not willing, thou art without excuſe, when thou hadſt Heaven and Hell ſet open in the word of God, to make thee *willing*, God will diſtinguiſh thy *wilfulneſs* from *unwilling weakneſs*.

3. There is more *Power* in all of you then you uſe, or then you are well aware of. It wanteth but *awakening* to bring it into act. Do you not find in your *Repentings*, that the change is more in *your Will* then in *your Power*? and in the *awaking* of your *Will* and *Reaſon* into *act*, then in the addition of meer *abilities*? and that therefore you befool your ſelves for your ſins & your neglects, & wonder that you had no more uſe of your underſtandings? Let but a ſtorm at Sea, or violent ſickneſs, or approaching death, rowſe up and waken the powers which you have, and you will find there was much more aſleep in you then you uſed.

I ſhall therefore next endeavour to awaken your abilities, or tell you how you ſhould awaken them.

When your ſouls are drowſie, and you are forgetting your God, and your latter end, and the matters of Eternity have little force and ſavour with you; when you grow lazie and

ſuper-

ſuperficial, and religion ſeems a life-leſs thing; and you do your duty as if it were in vain or againſt our wils, when you can loſe your time, and delay repentance, and friends, and profit, and reputation, and pleaſure can be heard againſt the Word of God, and take you off when you do all by the halves, and languiſh in your Chriſtian courſe, as near to death; *Stir up your ſouls* with the *urgency* of ſuch *Queſtions* as theſe.

Qu. 1. *Can I do no more then this for God!* Who gave me all? Who deſerveth all? Who ſeeth me in my duties and my ſins? When he puts me *purpoſely* on the trial, what I can do for his ſake and ſervice, Can I *do no more*? Can I love him no more? and obey, and watch, and work no more?

Qu. 2. *Can I do no more then this for Chriſt*? For him that did ſo much for me? that lived ſo exactly; obeyed ſo perfectly; walked ſo inoffenſively and meekly; deſpiſing all the *baits*, and *honours*, and riches of the

World? that loved me to the death; and offereth me freely all his benefits, and would bring me to eternal Glory, Are these careless, cold and dull endeavors my best return for all this mercy?

Qu. 3. *Can I do no more, when my salvation is the prize?* when Heaven or Hell depend much on it? when I know this before-hand, and may see in the glasse of the holy Scriptures, what is prepared for the *diligent* and the *negligent*, and what work there is and will be for ever in Heaven and Hell on these accounts? Could I not do more, if my house were on fire, or my estate, or life, or friend in danger, then I do for my salvation?

Qu. 4. *Can I do no more for the souls of men?* when they are undone for ever if they be not speedily delivered? Is this my love and compassion to my neighbour, my servant, freind or child?

Qu. 5. *Can I do no more for the Church of God?* for the publick good? for the peace and welfare of the

the Nation and our proſperity? in ſuppreſſing ſin? in praying for deliverance? or in promoting Works of publick benefit?

Qu. 6. *Can I do no more, that have loytered ſo long*? and go no faſter, that have ſlept till the evening of my daies, when *Diligence* muſt be the diſcovery of my Repentance?

Qu. 7. *Can I do no more, that know not now but I am doing my laſt?* That ſee how faſt my Time makes haſte, and know I muſt be quickly gone? that know it muſt be *now* or *never*: and that this is all the time I ſhall have, on which an endleſs life dependeth?

Qu. 8. *Can I do no better, when I know before hand, what different aſpects diligence and negligence will have, to the awakened ſoul in the review*? What a comfort it will be at death and judgement, to be able to ſay, I did my beſt, or loytered not away the time I had? And what a vexatious and heart-diſquieting thing it will then be to look back on time as

irrecoverably loſt, and on a life of tryal, as caſt away upon impertinences, while the work that we lived for lay undone? ſhall I now by trifling prepare ſuch griping and tormenting thoughts, for my awakened conſcience?

Qu. 9. *Can I do no more, when I am ſure I cannot do too much, and am ſure there is nothing elſe to be preferred*? and that its this I live for: and that life is for action, and diſpoſeth thereunto; (and holy life for holy action) and that its better not live, then not attain the ends of living; when I have ſo many and unwearied enemies; when ſloath is my danger, and the advantage of my enemy; when I know that Reſolution and Vigorous diligence, is ſo neceſſary that all is loſt without it; will temptations be reſiſted, and ſelf denied, and concupiſcence mortified, and fleſhly deſires tamed and ſubdued, and ſin caſt out, and a holy communion with Heaven maintained with idleneſs and ſloath? will families

milies be well ordered, and Church, or City, or Country well governed? will the careleſs ſinners that I am bound to help, be converted and ſaved, with ſitting ſtill, and with ſome heartleſs cold endeavours?

Qu. 10. *Can I do no more that have ſo much help?* that have mercies of all ſorts encouraging me, and creatures attending me; that have health to enable me, or affliction to remember and excite me; that have ſuch a maſter, ſuch a work, ſuch a reward as better cannot be deſired; who is leſſe excuſable for neglect then I?

Qu. 11. *Could I do no more, if I were ſure that my ſalvation lay on this one duty?* that according to this *prayer*, it ſhould go with me *for ever*; or if the ſoul of my *child*, or *ſervant*, or neighbour muſt ſpeed for ever, as my endeavours ſpeed with them now for their converſion? for ought I know it may be thus.

Qu. 12. Would I have God to come with the ſpur and rod? How

do I complain when affliction is upme? And will I neither endure it, nor be quickened without it? Is it not better mend my pace, and work on easier tearms?

I would not have distressed souls to use these considerations meerly to *disquiet* themselves for their *infirmities*, and so live in *heavinesse* and *self-vexation*, because they cannot be as good as they desire, or do as much and as well as they should do: It is not despair that will mend the matter, but make it worse: But I would wish the lazie sloathful soul to plead these Questions with it self, and try whether they have no quickning power, if closely urged, and seriously considered.

Believe it, Sirs, it is the deceitfulness of prosperity that keeps up the *reputation* of a *slathful life*, and makes *holy diligence* seem *unnecessary*. When affliction comes, awakened reason is ashamed of this, and seeth it as an odious thing.

BY this time you may ſee, what difference there is, between the judgement of *God*, and of the *world*; and what to think of the underſtandings of thoſe men, (be they *high* or *low*, *learned* or *unlearned*) that hate or oppoſe this *holy diligence*. God bids us *love*, and *ſeek* and *ſerve* him, with all our *heart*, and *ſoul*, and *might*: And theſe men call them *Zealots*, and *Preciſians*, and *Puritans* that *endeavour* it; though, alas, they fall exceeding ſhort, when they have done their beſt. It is one of the moſt wonderfull monſtroſities and deformities that ever befel the nature of man, that men, that *learned men*, that men that in other things are *wiſe*, ſhould *ſeriouſly* think that the utmoſt diligence to obey the Lord and ſave our ſouls, is *needleſs*; and that ever they ſhould take it for a *crime*, and make it a matter of *reproach*: That the *ſerious diligent obeying of Gods Laws*, ſhould be the matter of the common

mon diſdain and hatred of the world; that no men are more *generally abhorred*, and toſt up and down by impatient men; that great and ſmall, the Rulers and the vulgar rabble, in *moſt places* of the earth cannot endure them: To think how the *firſt man* that ever was born into the world, did *hate his own brother* till he had proceeded to murder him, becauſe he ſerved God better then himſelf, [*Becauſe his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous,*] 1 Joh. 3. 12. And how *conſtantly* this horrid unnatural madneſs, hath ſucceeded and raged in the world from *Cain* until this day! It is not in vain that the Holy Ghoſt addeth, in the next words, 1 *Joh.* 3. 13. [*Marvail not my brethren, if the world hate you*] implying that we art apt to *marvail at it*; as I confeſſe I have oft and greatly done. Methinks, it is ſo wonderful a *plague* and *ſtain* in Nature, that it doth very much to confirm me of the truth of Scripture; of the doctrine of mans fall, and original ſin,

ſin, and the neceſſity of a Reconciler, and of renewing grace.

Diſtracted miſerable ſouls! is it not enough for you to refuſe your *own ſalvation*; but you muſt be angry withal that will not imitate you! Is it not mad enough, and bad enough to *chooſe* damnation, but you muſt be offended withal that are not of your mind! If *you* will not believe God, that without Regeneration, Converſion, Holineſs, and a Heavenly Spiritual life, there is no Salvation to be hoped for (*John* 3. 3, 5, 6. *Mat.* 18. 3. *Heb.* 12. 14. *Rom.* 8. 9, 13. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17.) muſt we all be *unbelievers* with you? if you will laugh at Hell till you are in it, muſt we do ſo too? if *God* and *glory* ſeem leſs worth to you, then your *fleſhly pleaſure for a time*, muſt we renounce our *Chriſtianity* and our *Reaſon* for fear of differing from *you*? if you dare differ from your *Maker*, and the *Redeemer*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, and all the *Prophets*, *Apoſtles*, and *Evangeliſts*, and all that ever came

to

to Heaven, might not we be bold to differ from you? If you will needs be ungodly, and chooſe your everlaſting wo, be patient with them that have more underſtanding, and dare not be ſo hardy, as to leap after *you* in the unquenchable fire: *Mock not* at *Holineſs* if you have no mind of it. *Hinder not* them that *ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait gate*, if you refuſe your ſelves. Be not ſo deſirous of company in Hell: It will prove no comfort to you, or abatement of your pain.

But becauſe you have the faces to contradict the God of Truth, and to reproach that work which he commandeth, and to ſay, *what needs ſo much ado*? when he bids us *do it with all our might*; I will briefly tell you what you are doing, and ſhew you the ugly face of the ſcorner, and the filthy hearts of the enemies of Holineſs, that if it may be, you may loath your ſelves.

1. *Theſe enemies of Holy diligence, deny God with their works and lives, and*

and are practical Atheists; and it seems are so near of kin to [*that wicked one*] (see 1 *Joh.* 3. 12.) that they would *have all others* do so too. And then how soon would *earth* be turned into *Hell!* The case is plain: If *God* deserve not to be loved and served with all thy heart, and soul, and might, he is *not God*. And if thy wealth, or honour, or flesh, or friend, deserveth more of thy love, and care, and diligence then God, then that is thy God that deserveth best. See now what these deriders of purity and obedience do think of *God*, and of the world.

2. *These Cainites do blaspheme the Governour of the world*: When *he* hath *given Laws* to the Creatures, that he made of nothing; These wretches deride and hate men for obeying them. If *God* have not *commanded* that which you oppose, contradict it, and spare not: I would you were *much more* against that pretended Religion which *he commandeth not*. But if he *have commanded*

it,

it, and yet you *dare* revile them as too *pure* and *preciſe* that would obey it, what do you but charge the King of Saints with making Laws that are not to be obeyed? which muſt needs imply that they are *Fooliſh*, or Bad, though made by the *moſt wiſe* and *Good*.

3. *Theſe Enemies of Holineſs, oppoſe the practice of the very firſt principles of all Religion.* For *Heb* 11. 6. [*He that commeth to God muſt believe that God is, and that he is the Rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.*] And its *diligent ſeeking him*, that they hate and ſet themſelves againſt.

4. *Do not they not judge Heaven to be leſs worth then Earth*; when they will do *leſs* for it, and would have others to do ſo too?

5. *They would have us all unchriſten and unman our ſelves*, as if there were *no life to come*, or as if our *reaſon* and all our *faculties* were given us *in vain*. For if they are nōt given us for greater matters then all the honours

and

and pleasures of the world, they are *in vain*, or *worse*; and the life of man is but a dream and misery. Were not a beast less miserable, if this were all?

6. *How base a price do these Cainites set on the immortal soul of man*, that think it not worth so *much ado*, as the careful obedience of the Laws of Christ? Not worth so much as they do themselves for their filthy sins and perishing flesh? But would have us so mad as to sell Heaven and our Souls, for a little sinful sloath and ease.

7. *These enemies of holiness would have men take their Mercies for their Hurt, and their greatest Blessings for a Burden or a Plague, and to run into Hell to be delivered from them.* Why man, dost thou know *what Holiness is*? and what it is to have access to God? I tell thee it is the *foretaste of Heaven on Earth.* It is the highest Glory, and sweetest delight, and chiefest commodity to the soul. And art thou afraid of having *too much*

of

of this? What, *thou that haſte none* (which ſhould make thee tremble) art thou afraid of having *too much*? Thou that *never feareſt too much money*, nor *too much honour*, nor *too much health*, art thou afraid of *too much ſpiritual health and holineſs*? what ſhall be thy *deſire*, if thou loath and fly from thy *felicity*?

8. You that are loyal ſubjects, take heed of theſe ungodly ſcorners: For by conſequence *they would tempt you to deſpiſe your King, and make a mock at the obeying of his Commands and Laws.* For if a man perſwade you to deſpiſe a *Judge*, he implieth that you may deſpiſe a *Conſtable*. No *King* is ſo great in compariſon of *God*, as a *fly* or *worm* is to *that King*. He therefore that would relax the Laws of God, and make it ſeem a *needleſs thing* to obey him *diligently* and *exactly*, implieth that obedience to any of the ſons of men is *much more needleſs*.

And you that are children or ſervants, take heed of the doctrine of

theſe

these men: *Masters*, admit it not into your *Families*. If he be worthy to be scorned as a *Puritan* or *Precisian*, that is careful to please and obey the Lord, what scorn do your children and servants deserve, if *they* will be obedient and pleasing to *such as you*?

9. All you that are poor Tradesmen, take heed of the *consequences of the Cainites scorns*, lest it make you give over the labours of your Calling, and turn your selves and Families into beggery. For if *Heaven* be not worth your *greatest labour*, your *bodies* are not worth the *least*.

10. *These Cainites speak against the awakened Consciences, and the confessions of all the world.* Whatsoever they may say in the dream of their blind presumption and security, at last, when Death hath opened their eyes, they all cry, O that we had been Saints! O that we might die the death of the righteous, and that our last end might be as his! O that we had spent that Time, and

Care,

Care, and Labour for our ſouls, which we ſpent on that which now is gall to our remembrance! And yet theſe men will take no warning, but now oppoſe and deride that courſe that all the world do wiſh at laſt they had been as zealous for as any.

11. *The enemy himſelf hath a conſcience within him*, that either grudgeth againſt his malicious impiety, and witneſſeth that he abuſeth them that are far better then himſelf; or at leaſt will ſhortly call him to a reckoning, and tell him better what he did, and make him change his face and tune, and wiſh himſelf in the caſe of thoſe that he did oppoſe.

12. To conclude the *Cainite is of the wicked one*, 1 Joh. 3. 12. of *his Father the Devil*, Joh. 8. 42, 44. and is his walking, ſpeaking inſtrument on Earth, ſaying what he himſelf would ſay: He is the *open enemy of God*. For who are *his enemies*, but the *Enemies of Holineſs*, of *his Laws*, of our *Obedience*, of his *Image*, and

of

of his *Saints*? And how will Christ deal at last with *his Enemies*? Luk. 19. 27. O that they knew, that foreseeing, they might escape! This is the *true*, the *ugly* picture of a *Cainite*, or *Enemy* of a *holy life*, that reproacheth *serious diligence* as a *precise* and *needless thing*, when God commandeth us, and death, and the Grave, and Eternity admonish us to do his work with all our might. Now consider this ye that forget God, lest he *tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you*, Psal. 50. 22.

BUt of all the opposers of *serious Holiness* in the world, there are none more unexcusable and deplorably miserable, then those that profess themselves *Ministers of Christ*. Would one *believe* that had not known them, that there are such men in the world! Alas, there are *too many*. Though Education, and the Laws of the Land engage them to preach *true doctrine*, yet are they *false Teachers* in the *Application*. For they

they never well learned the holy and heavenly doctrine which they preach, nor digested it, or received the power and impress of it upon their hearts; and therefore retaining their natural corruptions, impiety and enmity to the Life, and Power, and practice of that Doctrine, they *indirectly* destroy what directly they would seem to build; and preach both for God, and against him; for Christ and the *Holy Spirit*, and *against them*; for *Godliness*, and *against* it, both in the same Sermon. In *General*, they must needs speak for the word of God, and a holy life: But when they come to the *particulars*, they secretly reproach it, and condemn the *parts*, while they commend the *whole*. In *General* they speak well of Religious, Godly, Holy people; But when they *meet* with them, they hate them, and make them *Precisians*, a Sect that is *every where spoken against, pestilent fellows, and movers of sedition*, as the Apostles were accused,

ſed, *Acts* 24. 5. & 28. 22. and any thing that malice can invent to make them odious: And what they *cannot prove*, they will *cloſely intimate* in the *falſe application* of their doctrines, deſcribing them ſo as may induce the hearers to believe that they are a company of ſelf-conceited Hypocrites, factious, proud, diſobedient, turbulent, peeviſh, affecting ſingularity, deſiring to ingroſs the reputation of Godlineſs to themſelves, but ſecretly as bad as others. And when they have thus repreſented them to the ignorant ſort of people, they have made the way of Godlineſs odious, and ſufficiently furniſhed miſerable ſouls with prejudice and diſlike; ſo that becauſe the perſons are thus made hateful to them, all ſerious diligence for Heaven, all tenderneſs of Conſcience, and fear of ſinning, all heavenly diſcourſe, and ſerious preaching, reading, or praying, are alſo made odious for their ſakes: For hearing ſo ill of the perſons,

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and seeing that these are the things wherein they differ from others, they reduce their judgement of their *practices* to their foresetled judgement of the persons. When their diligence in their Families in prayer and instructions, in reading, and fruitful improvement of the Lords day, or any other actions of strictness and holy industry are mentioned, these ungodly Ministers are ready to blot them with some open calumnies, or secret reproaches, or words of suspicion, to vindicate their own unholy lives, & make people believe that serious piety is faction & hypocrisie. The black tincture of their minds, and the design and drift of their preaching may be perceived in the jeers, and girds, and slanderous intimations against the most diligent servants of the Lord. The *controverted truths* that such maintain, they represent as *errours*: Their *unavoidable errours* they represent as *heresie*: Their *duties* they represent as *faults*: and their *humane*

frailties

frailties as enormous *crimes*: They feign them to be guilty of the things that never entred into their *thoughts*. And if *some* that have profeſſed godlineſs, be guilty of greater crimes, they would make men believe that the reſt are ſuch, and that the family of Chriſt is to be judged of by a *Judas*, and the ſcope is to intimate that either their Profeſſion is *culpable*, or *needleſs*, and *leſs commendable*. *Regeneration* they would make to be but the entrance into the Church by Baptiſm, and any further converſion, then the leaving off ſome groſs ſins, and taking up ſome heartleſs forms of duty, to be but a fancy or unneceſſary thing! And they would draw poor people to believe, that if they be born again Sacramentally of water, they may be ſaved, though they be not born again by the *renewing of the Holy Spirit*. Being ſtrangers themſelves to the myſtery of *Regeneration*, and to the life of Faith, and a

heavenly Converſation, and to the loving and ſerving God with all their Soul and Might, They firſt endeavour to quiet themſelves with a belief that theſe are but fancies or unneceſſary; and then to deceive the people with that by which they have firſt deceived themſelves.

And it is worthy your obſervation, *what it is in Religion* that theſe formal Hypocrites *are againſt*. There are ſcarce any words ſo ſound or holy but they can bear them, if they be but deprived of their *Life*: Nor ſcarce any duty, if it be but *mortified*, but they can endure. But it is the *Spirit* and *Life* of all Religion which they cannot bear. As a *Body* differeth from a *Carkaſs*, not by the *parts*, but by the *life*; ſo there is a certain *life* in preaching, and prayer, and all other acts of worſhip, which is perceived by ſeveral ſorts of hearers. The *Godly* perceive it to their *edification* and *delight*: For here it is that they are quickned and

and encouraged. *Life* begetteth *life*, as fire kindleth fire. The ungodly often perceive it to their vexation, if not to their conviction and conversion; This *life* in preaching, praying, discipline, reproof, and conference, is it which biteth, and galleth, and disquieteth their consciences. And *this* they kick and rail against; *This* is the thing that will not let them sleep quietly in their sin and misery; but is calling and jogging them to awake, and will not let them sin in peace, but will either convert them or torment them before the time. It is the *Life* of Religion that the hypocrite *wants*; and the *life* that he is *most against*. A *painted fire* burneth not. A *dead Lion* biteth not. The *Carkass* of an *Enemy* is not *formidable*. Let the words of that Sermon that *most offendeth them*, be separated from the *life*, and put into a *Homily*, and said or *read* in a formal drowsie, or a *School-boys tone*, and they can *hear* it and *commend* it. Let

the *same words* of prayer which now they like not, be *said over* as a *lifeless customary form*, and they can like it well. I speak not against the *use of forms*, but the *abuse* of them: Not against the *Body*, but the *Carkass*. Let *forms themselves* be used by a spiritual serious man, in a *spiritual serious manner*, with the interposition of any quickening exhortations, or occasional passages, that tend to keep them waken and attentive, and make them *feel* what you *mean* and are *about*, and you shall see they love not such *animated forms*. It is the *living Christian*, and *lively worship*, and *serious spiritual Religion*, which they hate: *kill* it and they can *bear* it: Let the *picture* of my *enemy* be nearer and comelier then his person was, and I can endure it in my bedchamber, better then *himself* in the *meanest dress*. It is the *living Christians* that in all parts of the world are chiefly persecuted: Let them be *once dead*, and *dead-hearted hypocrites*

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themſelves will honour them; eſpecially at a ſufficient diſtance: They will deſtroy the *living Saints*, and keep Holy dayes for the *dead ones*. *Wo to you, Scribes and Phariſees hypocrites, becauſe ye build the Tombs of the Prophets, and garniſh the Sepulchers of the Righteous, and ſay, if we had been in the days of our Fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets: Wherefore be ye witneſſes unto your ſelves, that ye are the children of them which killed the Prophets: Fill ye up the meaſure of your Fathers; ye ſerpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye eſcape the damnation of Hell!* Matth. 23. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33. The dog that will not meddle with the *dead creature*, will purſue the *living*; and when he ſees it *ſtir no more*, will *leave it*. Chriſtianity without *ſeriouſneſs* is not Chriſtianity; and therefore not lyable to the hatred of its enemies as ſuch. Say any thing, and do any thing how ſtrict ſo ever, if

yon will but act it as a player on the ſtage, or do it coldly, ſlightly, & as if you were but in jeaſt, you may have their approbation. But it is this *life*, and *ſeriouſneſs*, and worſhipping God in *Spirit* and *Truth*, that convinceth them that *they themſelves are lifeleſs*, and therefore troubleth their deceitful peace, and therefore muſt not have their friendſhip. If it were the meer *bulk* of duty that they are weary of, how comes it to paſs that a *Papiſt*, at his Pſalter, Beads, and Maſs-books, can ſpend more hours without much wearineſs or oppoſition, then we can do in ſerious worſhip? Turn all but into *words*, and *beads*, and *canonical hours* and *dayes*, and *ſhews*, and *ceremony*, and you may be as religious as you will, and be *Righteous overmuch*, and few will hate, or reproach, or perſecute you *among them*, as too preciſe or ſtrict. But *living Chriſtians* and *worſhip*, come among them like fire, that burneth them, and makes them

them ſmart, with a *word that is quick, powerful, ſharper then any two edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing of ſoul and ſpirit, joynts and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Heb. 4. 12.

And the *enmity* of the *Cainites* may teach the *Chriſtian*, what he ſhould be, and wherein his *excellency* lieth. It is *life*, and *ſeriouſneſs* that your enemies hate: and therefore it is *life* and *ſeriouſneſs* that you muſt above all maintain; though dead-hearted hypocrites never ſo much oppoſe and contradict you.

O ſirs, they are no trifles, but the greateſt things that God hath ſet before you in his Word, and called you out to proſecute and poſſeſſe; and your time of ſeeking them is ſhort; and therefore you have no time for trifles, nor any to loſe in idleneſs and ſloath. And of all men, Preachers ſhould be moſt ſenſible of this. If *they were not* againſt ſerious holineſs in *others*, it is dou-

ble wickedneſs for ſuch as they, to be *againſt it in themſelves*. It is great things that they have to ſtudy and to ſpeak of; and ſuch as call for the greateſt ſeriouſneſs, and reverence and gravity in the ſpeaker, and condemn all trifling in *matter* or in manner. A man that is ſent to Chriſt to run for an immortal crown, or to direct others in ſuch a race, to ſave his own, or other mens ſouls, from endleſs miſery, ſhould be aſhamed to fill up his time with trifles, or to be ſlight and cold about ſuch great and weighty things. All the heart, and ſoul, and might, is little enough for matters of ſuch unſpeakable importance. When I hear Preachers or people ſpend time, in little impertinent fruitleſs things, that do but divert them from the great buſineſs of their lives, or to *dally* with the *greateſt matters*, rather then to uſe them, and treat of them with a ſeriouſneſs ſuitable to their importance, I oft think of the words

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of *Seneca*, the *ſerious Moraliſt*, as ſhaming the hypocriſie of ſuch trifling Preachers and Profeſſors of the Chriſtian faith; [*Verba copioſa componis, & interrogans vincula nectis, & dicis, Acuta ſunt iſta: Nihil acutius aristâ; & in quo eſt utilis? Quedam inutilia & inefficacia ipſa ſubtilitas reddit.*] that is [*You compoſe copious words, and tye hard knots by curious queſtions; and you ſay, O theſe are acute things! what is more acute then the beal of corn? and yet what is it good for? ſubtilty it ſelf makes ſome things unprofitable and uneffectual.*]

[*Iſtæ ineptiæ Poetis relinquantur, quibus aures oblectare propoſitum eſt & dulcem fabulam nectere; ſed qui ingenia ſanare, & fidem in rebus humanis retinere, ac memoriam, officiorum animis ingerere volunt, ſerio loquantur, & inagnis viribus rem agant;*] that is, [*Leave theſe toyes or fooleries to Poets, whoſe buſineſs is to delight the ear, and to compoſe a pleaſant fable.*

But they that mean to heal mens understandings, and retain credibility among men, and to bring into mens minds the remembrance of their duties, must speak seriously, and do their business with all their might.]

Demens omnibus merito videret--- [*He would justly by all be taken for a mad man, that when the Town expecteth to be stormed by the enemies, and others are busie at work for their defence, will sit idle, proposing some curious questions*] ---- *Nunquid tibi demens videtur, si istis impendero operam, & nunc obsideor? quid agam? mors me sequitur; vita fugit; Adversus hæc me doce aliquid: effice ut ego mortem non timeam, & vita me non effugiat.*] [*And shall I not be taken for a mad man, if I should busie my self about such things that am now besieged? what shall I do? death pursueth me: teach me something against these; make death not dreadful to me, or life not to fly from me.*] *Si multum esset ætatis, parce dispensandum erit, ut sufficeret ne-*

necessariis : nunc quæ dementia est supervacua discere in tanta temporis egestate!] [*If we had much time, we should sparingly lay it out, that it might suffice for necessary things: But now what a madness is it, to learn things needless or superfluous in so great a scarcity of time!*] [*Metire ergo ætatem tuam : tam multa non capit. Measure thy age : Its not enough for so many things.*] [*Relinque istum ludum literarum Philosophis. Rem magnificam! ad syllabas vocant qui animum minuta discendo diminuunt & conterunt, & id agunt, ut Philosophia potius difficilis quam magna videatur : Socrates, qui totam Philosophiam revocavit ad mores hanc summam dixit esse sapientiam, bona malaque distinguere*] [*Leave this learned play to Philosophers : A gallant business! They call us to syllables, and debase, and depress the mind by learning such little trivial things, and make Philosophy rather to seem a matter of difficulty then great.* Socrates, *that revoked all Philosophy to manners, di-*

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call this the highest wisdom, to distinguish good and evil.]

Did a *Seneca* see by the light of nature, so much of the necessity of *seriousness* and *diligence*, about the *matters of the soul*? and so much of the madness of spending *words* and *time* on *trifles*? And yet shall there be found a man among *professed Christians*, and among the *Preachers of Faith and Holiness*, that plead for *trifling*, and scorn at *seriousness*, and count them *moderate* and *wise* that a *Heathen* brands as *toyish* and *distracted*?

What is it that *cloudeth* the *glory of Christianity*, and keepeth so great a part of the world in Heathenism and Infidelity: but this, that *among Christians* there are so *few* that are *Christians indeed*? and those few are so obscured by the multitude of *formal trifling hypocrites*, that *Christianity* is *measured* and *judged* of by the *lives of those that are no Christians*? *Religion* is a thing to be *demon-*

monſtrated and *honoured* and *commended* by *practice*: *words alone* are ineffectual to repreſent its excellency to ſo *blind* a world, that muſt know by *feeling*, having loſt their *ſight*. In our *profeſſed faith* we mount unto the Heavens, and leave poor unbelievers wallowing in the dirt. O what a tranſcendent, unconceivable glory, do we profeſs to expect with God unto eternity! And what manner of perſons ſhould they be, in holy converſation and godlineſs, that look for ſuch a life as this? How baſely ſhould they eſteem thoſe tranſitory things, that are the food and felicity of the ſenſual world? How patiently ſhould they undergo contempt and ſcorn, and whatſoever man can inflict upon them? How ſtudiouſly ſhould they devote and refer all their time, and ſtrength, and wealth, and intereſt, to this their glorious bleſſed end? How ſeriouſly ſhould they ſpeak of, and how induſtriouſly ſhould they ſeek,

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ſuch ſure, ſuch near, ſuch endleſs joyes? Did profeſſed Chriſtians more exactly conform their hearts and lives to their profeſſion and holy rule, their *lives* would confute the reproaches of their enemies, and command a reverent and awful eſtimation from the obſervers, and do more to convince the unbelieving world of the truth and dignity of the Chriſtian faith, then all the words of the moſt ſubtile diſputant Chriſtianity being an affecting practical Science, muſt practically and affectionately be declared according to its *nature*: Arguments do but paint it out: And pictures do no more make known its excellency, then the *picture* of *meat* and *drink* makes known its *ſweetneſs*. When a *doctrine ſo holy*, is *viſibly exemplified*, and *liveth*, and *walketh*, and *worketh in ſerious Chriſtians* before the world: Either this or nothing will convince them and conſtrain them, to glorify our Lord,

and

and say, that *God is among us or in us of a truth*, Mat. 5. 16. 1 Cor. 14. 25. But it is *unchristian lives* that darkneth the glory of the Christian *Faith*. When men that profess such glorious hopes, shall be as sordidly earthly, and sensual, and ambitious, and impotent, and impatient as other men, they seem but fantastical dissembles.

And yet shall there be found such a perfidious wretch under the heavens of God, as a *professed Minister of Christ*, that shall *subtilly* or *openly* labour to make an exact, and holy, and heavenly conversation a matter of *reproach* and *scorn*, and that under pretence of reproving the sins of *Hypocrites* and *Schismaticks*, shall make the exactest conformity to the Christian rule, and faithfullest obedience to the Almighty Soveraign, to seem to be but hypocrisie or self-conceitedness, or needless trouble, if not the way to sedition, and publick trouble, and turning

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all things upside down? that cannot reprove sin, without malicious insinuating slanders or suspitions against the holy law and holy life, that are most contrary to sin, as life to death, as health to sickness, and as light to darkness?

For *any man*, especially *any professed Christian*, *any where* to oppose or scorn at godliness, is a dreadful sign, as well as a heinous sin: But for a *Preacher of Godliness* to oppose and scorn at *Godliness*, and that in the *Pulpit*, while he pretendeth to promote it, and plead for it in the name of Christ, is a sin that should strike the heart of man with horrour to conceive of.

Though I cannot subscribe myself to that passage in the second part of the tenth Homily, *Tom.* 2. pag. 150. (however I very much love and honour the book of Homilies) yet for their sakes that not only can subscribe to it, but would have all kept out of the Ministry that

that cannot, and that take it for that Doctrine of the Church of *England* which they will believe and Preach, I will recite it to the terror of the guilty, not to drive to despair, but to awake them or to shame them for their opposition to the wayes of godliness.

Expounding *Psal.* 1. 1. *Blessed is the man that hath not walked after the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful*] having shewed who are the [*ungodly*] and [*the sinners*] it addeth these words.

"[*The third sort he calleth scor-*
"*ners*; that is, a sort of men whose
"hearts are so stuffed with malice,
"that they are not contented to
"dwell in sin, and to lead their
"lives in all kind of wickedness,
"but also they do contemn and
"scorn in others all godliness, true
"Religion, all honesty and vertue.
"Of the two first sorts of men, I
"will not say, but they may take

"Re-

" Repentance, and be converted
" unto God. Of the third sort, I
" think I may without danger of
" Gods judgement pronounce, that
" never any yet were converted un-
" to God by Repentance, but con-
" tinued still in their abominable
" wickedness, heaping up to them-
" selves damnation against the day
" of Gods inevitable judgement.

Though I dare not say but some such have Repented, yet let the scorners that believe this, remember, that they subscribe the sentence of their own condemnation.

Though I look upon this sort of the enemies of Holiness as those that are as unlikely to be recovered and saved, as almost any people in the world, except *Apostates* and *Malicious Blasphemers* of the *Holy Ghost*; yet in compassion to the people and themselves. I shall plead the cause of God with their consciences, and try what Light can do with their understandings, and the ter-

terrours of the Lord with their hardened hearts.

1. *A Preacher of the Gospel should much excel the people in understanding*: And therefore this sin is *greater* in them then other men: what *means*, what *light* do *they* sin against? Either thou *knowest* the *necessity* of *serving* for salvation with the greatest diligence, or thou *dost not*. If not, what a sin and shame is it to undertake the sacred Office of the Ministry, while thou knowest not the things that are *necessary to salvation*, and that which every *Infant in the Faith* doth know? But if thou *dost know it*, how dost thou make shift maliciously to oppose it, without feeling the beginnings of Hell upon thy Conscience? When it is thy *work* to *read* the Scriptures, and meditate on them, dost thou not read thy doom, and meditate terrour? How canst thou choose but perceive that the scope of the word of God is contrary to the bent of

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thy affections and ſuggeſtions? Yea what is more evident by the *Light of Nature*, then that God and our ſalvation cannot be regarded with too much holy ſerioufneſs, exactneſs and induſtry? Should not the *beſt things* be *beſt loved*? and the *greateſt matters* have our *greateſt care*? And is there any thing to be compared with God and our eternal ſtate? O what *overwhelming* ſubjects are theſe to a ſober and conſiderate *mind*! what toyes are all things in compariſon of them! And yet doſt thou make light of them, and alſo *teach men ſo to do*! As if there were ſomething elſe that better deſerved mens greateſt care and diligence then they. What a *Preacher*, and not a *Believer*! Or a *Believer*, and yet not ſee enough in the matters of *Eternity* to engage all our powers of ſoul and body, againſt all the world that ſhould ſtand in competition?

2. *Is it not ſinful and terrible enough;*

nough, to be thy self in a carnal unrenewed state! (Rom. 1. 13.) and to be without the Spirit and life of Christ (v. 9.) but thou must be so cruel as to make others miserable also? Psal. 50. 16, 17. [But to the wicked saith God, What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes? or that thou shouldest take my Covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee?] Matth. 5. 19. Whosoever shall break one of the least Commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven: But whosoever shall do and teach the same, shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.]

3. What an aggravation is it of thy impiety and soul-murder, that thou art bound by office to teach men that life of holiness which thou oppossest, and to perswade them to that with all thy might, which thou endeavourest closely and cunningly to disgrace! And wilt thou be a

Traytor

Traytor to Christ, in the name of a *Messenger* and Preacher of the Gospel? Wilt thou engage thy self to promote his interest, and to use all thy skill and power to build men up in holiness and obedience; and when thou hast done this, wilt thou disgrace and hinder it? Dost thou take on thee to go on the message of Christ, and then speak against him? We do not find that *Judas* dealt thus with him: when he sent him as he did other Preachers, we read not that he preacht against him. O let not my soul be numbered with such men in the day of the Lord! It will be easier for *Sodom* and *Gomorah*, then for the refusers of the Word and Grace of Christ. What then will be the doom of the *opposers*? And above all of those *treacherous opposers*, that pretend themselves to propagate and promote them.

If the wit and malice of Satans instruments were sharpened against the wayes and servants of the Lord,

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it belongs *to you to plead Christs cause*, and shame these absur'd unreasonable gainsayers, and stop the mouth of impious contradiction: And will *you joyne* with the gainsayers, and secretly or openly say as they? Who should confound the deriders of a holy life but you? Who should lay open the excellencies of Christ, the Glory of Heaven, the terrours of the Lord, and all other obligations to the most serious Religiousness, but you that have undertaken it as your calling and employment? If any man in the Parish were so Atheistical and brutish, as to think God unworthy of our dearest Love, our most exact obedience, and most laborious service, who should display this Atheists folly, but you that are doubly (as Christians, and as Ministers) obliged to defend the honour of your Lord? If any of the people should fall into such a dream or dotage, as to question the necessity of our utmost dili-

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gence in our preparations for eternal life, who ſhould awake them by lifting up their voices as a trumpet, and help to recover their underſtandings, but *you* that are the watchmen, and know their blood will be required at *your* hands, if *you* give them not loud and timely warning? if any ſubtile malicious ſervant of the Devil, ſhould plead againſt the Neceſſity of Holyneſs, and diſſwade the people from ſerving God with all their might, who ſhould be ready to confirm the weak, and ſtrenghten and encourage them that are thus aſſaulted, and help to keep up their zeal and forwardneſs, but you that are leaders in the *Army* of the Lord? is it not a *Holy God* that you are engaged to ſerve? And a *Holy Church* in which you have your ſtation? And a *Communion of Saints* in which *you* have undertaken to adminiſter the *Holy things of God*? Have *you* not read what was done to *Nadab* and *Abihu*, when

when *Moſes* told *Aaron* [*This is it that the Lord ſpake, ſaying, I will be ſanctified in them that come nigh me, and before the people I will be glorified*] Lev. 10. 3. Is it not a *Holy Law and Goſpel* which you publiſh? You have undertaken to warn the ſloathful, the ſenſual, the worldly and the prophane, *that they ſtrive to enter in at the ſtraight gate, and ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs*, Luke 13. 24. Matth. 6. 33. *and to give diligence to make ſure their calling and election*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. *and to give all diligence in adding vertue to their faith*, &c. 2 Pet. 1. 5. *and with all diligence to keep their hearts*, Prov. 4. 23. And are *you* the men that would quench their zeal, and deſtroy the *holy diligence* which you *ſhould Preach*? The Lord touch your hearts, and recover you in time, or how woful will it be with ſuch *hardened Hypocrites*, that in the *Light*, and in *his Family and Livery*, and under the

Standard and Colours, dare prove Traitors and Enemies to the Lord?

4. And what an addition is it to your guilt, that *you ſpeak againſt God in his own Name?* By *Office* you are to deliver his *Meſſage*, and ſpeak to the people in his Name, and *in his ſtead*, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. And dare you before the Sun, and under the Heavens of God, and in his Hearing, perſwade men that the *moſt Holy God is againſt Holineſs*? and the King of *Saints* is an *adverſary to ſanctity*? and that he that made his *holy Law*, is againſt the moſt exact *obeying* of it? Dare you prefix a [*Thus ſaith the Lord*] to ſo impious a ſpeech as [*It is in vain to ſerve the Lord*] *what needs there ſo much ado for your ſalvation*? dare you go to men as from the Lord, & ſay [*You are too careful & diligent in his ſervice? Leſs ado may ſerve the turn! What needs this fervour, and redeeming time! This is but Puritaniſm or Preciſeneſs. Its better do as the moſt, and venture your ſouls without*

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so much ado.] Who could at last hold up his face, or stand before the dreadful Tribunal, that should be found in the guilt of such a Crime! What, to put God into the similitude of *Satan*, and describe the *most Holy*, as the *enemy of Holiness*! and make him plead *against himself*, and disgrace his own Image, and *dissuade* men from that which *he himself* hath made of necessity to their Salvation! What viler Blasphemy can be uttered!

5. And it aggravateth your sin, that your *Relation obligeth you to the most tender affections to your people*. And yet that *you* should seduce them to *damnation*. For the *Nurse* to poison them, for the *parents* to cut the *childrens throats*, is worse then for an *enemy* to do it. If the *Devil* our professed enemy, should himself appear to us, and say, [*Prepare not so seriously for death: Be not so strict, and diligent, and holy*] it were not, in many respects, so bad, as for *you* to do it, that should help to save us from his snares. Your chief

profess your selves their Fathers? that should travail in birth till Christ be formed in your peoples hearts! that should love your people as your own bowels, and tender the weak, and pitty the wicked, and stick at no labour, suffering or cost, that might advance their holiness, and further their Salvation; For you to tempt men into a *careless life*, and turn them out of the holy way, is an aggravated cruelty. Its worse for the Shepherd to destroy us then the Wolf. Read *Ezek.* 34. & 33.

6. *Are you not ashamed thus to contradict your selves?* What can you find to *Preach* from the *Word of God*, that tendeth not to this holy diligence which you are against? How can you make shift to Preach an hour, and not acquaint men with the *Duty* and *Necessity* of *seeking God with all their Might?* Do you not tell them, that *except they be converted and new born, they shall*

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not enter into the Kingdom of God, John 3. 3, 5. Mat. 18. 3. And *that without holiness none shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. And *that if they live after the flesh, they shall die*, Rom. 8. 13. And *that except their righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees they shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 5. 20. And will you in your *Application*, or *private discourses*, *unsay* all this again, and give God and your selves the *Lye*? And let people see, that the Pulpit is to you but as a Scage, and that you believe not what you speak?

7. Consider, that your *place and calling, maketh you the most successfull servants of the Devil*, and so the most bloody murderers of Souls, while *you* give your judgement against a strict and Heavenly life. For a *Drunkard in an Ale-house* to mock the Minister, and rail at serious Religion, is less regarded by sober men, and small advantage to

his Masters cause; nay the wickedness of his life, is so great a shame to his judgement, that it inclineth many to think well of those that he speaks against. But when a man that pretendeth to learning and understanding, and to be himself a Pastor of the Church, and Preacher of the Misteries of Christ, shall make them odious, that are most careful for their Souls, and most exact in pleasing God, and shall make all *serious diligence* for Heaven to seem but intemperate *zeal* and *selfconceitedness*: and shall describe a Saint as if the formal lifeless Hypocrite, that giveth God but the leavings of the world, and never set his heart on Heaven, were indeed the man: what a snare is here for the perdition of the ignorant! They that are naturally averse from holiness, and are easily perswaded to think that to be unnecessary or bad, which seems so much above them, and against them, will be much

much confirmed in their miſtakes and miſery; when they hear their Teachers ſpeak without them, the ſame that Satan by his ſuggeſtions doth within them. This turneth a trembling ſinner, into a hardened ſcorner: he that before went under the daily correction of his conſcience, for neglecting God, and omitting holy duties, and living to the fleſh, grows bold and fearleſs, when he hears the Preacher diſgrace the ſtricter purer way. By that time he hath heard a while the fear of God derided as preciſeneſs, and a tender conſcience reproached as a ſcrupulous fooliſh thing, his conſcience grows more plyable to his luſts, and hath little more to ſay againſt them. When Gods own profeſſed Miniſters, that ſhould be wiſer and better then the people, are againſt this zeal, and induſtry for Heaven, the people will ſoon think, that at leaſt it is tolerable in them. And they will ſooner learn

to deride a *Saint* from a *Sermon*, or discourse of a *Preacher* or a *learned man*, then from the scorns or talk of hundreds of the ignorant. And wilt thou *teach* them to *hate Godliness*, who hast undertaken before the Righteous God, to teach them to practice it? He that dispraiseth it, though under other names, and representeth it as odious, though masked with the title of some odious vice, doth indeed endeavour to make men hate it. And what a terrible account wilt thou have to make, when the seduction and transgression of all these sinners shall be charged upon thee? When Christ shall say to the haters, deriders and opposers of his holy wayes and servants [*In as much as you did it to one of the least of these my Brethren, you did it unto me.*] How durst you scorn the image of your Maker? and hate the *Saints* whose *Communion* you professed to *believe*; and deride or oppose that *serious holi-*

neſs, without which you had no hope of being ſaved? If then the ſinners become your accuſers, and ſay, [*Lord, we thought it had been but unneceſſary preciſeneſs, and that ſerious Chriſtians had been but ſelf-conceited factious hypocrites, and that lip ſervice with a common worldly life might have ſerved the turn; We heard our Preachers repreſent ſuch ſtrict and zealous men, as turbulent, ſeditious, and refractory, as odious and not as imitable: Their application was againſt them: Their diſcourſe derided them: Of them we learnt it. We thought they were wiſer and better then we: Of whom ſhould we learn but of our teachers!*] Wo to the Teachers that ever they were born, that muſt be then found guilty of this crime.

If *Adam*'s excuſe was *Eve*'s accuſation, [*The woman which thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave me of the tree and I did eat.*] And the *womans* excuſe did charge the Serpent [*The*

Serpent beguiled me and I did eat] Gen. 3. 12, 13. though it freed not the excuſers) How will it load *you*, when your people ſhall ſay [*The Teachers that we thought thou gaveſt us, did teach us & go before us in ſetting againſt this holy diligence; and we did but learn of them, and follow them!*

8. *Are not the people backward enough to the ſerving of God with all their might, unleſs you hinder them?* Is not the corrupted heart of lapſed man *averſe enough* to the matters of ſalvation, but you muſt make them worſe? If you had to do with the beſt and holieſt perſon in the world, that walketh with God in the moſt heavenly converſation, he would tell you that his dull and backward heart hath no need of *clogs*, and pull-backs, and diſcouragements, but of all the help that can be afforded him, to quicken him up to greater diligence. The *moſt zealous* lament that they are *ſo cold*: The

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most heavenly lament that they are *so earthly*, and so *strange to heaven*: The *most laborious* lament that they are *so sloathful*; and the *fruitfullest* believers that they are so *unprofitable*; and those that are most *watchful* of their words and deeds, that they are so *careless*; and those that most diligently redeem their time, lament it that they lose so much; and those that walk most *accurately* and *exactly*, that they are so *loose*, and keep no closer to the Rule. And yet darest thou increase the backwardness of the *ungodly*! will not their *carnal interests and lusts* serve turn to keep them from a *holy life*! Is not *Satan* strong enough of himself? will not the *common distaste* of *Godliness* in the world, sufficiently prejudice and avert them without *thy helps*? Do you see your people so *forward to do too much* for Heaven, that you must pull them back? Cannot souls be *damned* without your *furtherance*? or is it a *desirable work*?

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and will it *pay* you for your coſt and labour? The way is up hill; The beſt of us are weak, and frequently ready to ſit down! A thouſand impediments are caſt before us by Satan and the world, to make us linger till the time be paſt; and many a charm of pleaſure and diverſion to make us ſleep till the door be ſhut. And *Miniſters* are ſent to keep us *waking*, and take us by the hand, and lead us on, and remove impediments: and ſhall they ſet in with the enemy, and be our chiefeſt hinderers? O treacherous guides! O miſerable helps! Are not our dark underſtandings, our earthly, dull and backward hearts, our paſſions and troubled affections, our appetites & ſenſual inclinations, our natural ſtrangeneſs and averſeneſs to God, and heaven, and holineſs, enough to hinder us *without you*? Are not all the temptations of the Devil, the allurements of the fleſh, and world, the impediments of poverty

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and riches, of flattery, and of frowns, or friends and foes, in our callings and in our divertiſements, are not *all theſe* enough to cool and dull us, and keep us from ſerving God *too much*, and being *too careful* and *diligent* for our ſouls, but *Preachers* themſelves muſt be our *impediments and ſnares*? Now the Lord deliver our ſouls from ſuch impediments, and his Church from ſuch unhappy guides!

9. *Conſider whom thou imitateſt in this.* Is it Chriſt, or Satan? Chriſt calleth men to *ſtrive*, to *labour*, to *ſeek firſt*, to *watch*, to *pray alwayes*, and *not waxfaint*; Luk. 12. 24. John 6. 27. Mat. 6. 33. & 25. 13. Luke 18. 1. The Apoſtles call men to be [*fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord; to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works; to pray continually; to be a* [illegible] *generation, a royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People to ſhew forth the praiſes of him that hath called us, and offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices acceptable*

able to God by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. 1 Thes. 5. 17. Tit. 2. 14. Rom. 12. 11. *To fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold upon eternal life*, 1 Tim. 6. 12. *To serve God acceptably (being as a consuming fire) with reverence and godly fear*, Heb. 12. 28, 29. *To be stedfast, unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58.] And dare you gainsay the Lord and his Apostles, and concur with *Satan*, and the *Pharisees and enemies* of Christ?

10. You *do your worst to make the sacred office of the Ministry to become contemptible*, as *Eli*'s sons did: Poor people that cannot sufficiently distinguish the *Doctrine* from the *Application*, the *office* from the *person*, the *use* from the *abuse*, will be tempted to run from the Ordinances of God, and think the worse of others for your sakes, and suspect *all their food*, because you mix such poyson in

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it. And the more Holy and Neceſſary the office and work is, the greater is your ſin in corrupting it, or making it ſuſpected or abhorr'd.

Conſider ſoberly of theſe things, and then go on and ſpeak againſt a *Life of Holy diligence* if you *dare*.

I know you'l ſay, *It is not Godlineſs, but ſingularity, or humour, or diſobedience, or hypocriſie, or faction that you oppoſe*: and perhaps you'l inſtance in ſome that are guilty of ſome of theſe, or ſeem ſo at the leaſt.

But 1. I do here ſolemnly profeſs that I hate theſe crimes as well as you: and that it is not any part of my intention to plead for *intemperance, diſobedience in lawful things*, for *ſchiſms*, or *faction*, or *any irregularity*: And this I here put in againſt thoſe that are diſpoſed to miſunderſtand and miſreport us, and leave it as *on record* to prove them ſlanderers, that ſhall accuſe me of defending *any ſuch thing*. And I do proteſt againſt thoſe on the other

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ſide, that will fetch encouragement for any tranſgreſſion from my neceſſary plea for the *holy induſtry* & *vigilancy* of believers. And moreover, I do profeſs that it *is only the oppoſers of Holineſs that I mean in this Defence*, and *have not the leaſt intent to intimate that any others are guilty of that crime that are not*. But having premiſed this proteſtation, to prevent miſtakes and falſe reports, I anſwer now to the guilty.

2. If it be *crimes* only that you are againſt, deliver your ſelf ſo, as may not lay reproach or ſuſpicion *on Godlineſs*, which is moſt *oppoſite* to *all crimes*. Cannot you preach againſt *diviſions*, *diſobedience*, or any other ſin, without any ſcornful intimations or reflections againſt mens *diligent ſerving of the Lord*?

3. Why do not you *commend thoſe* that are *not liable* to your accuſations, and encourage them in *holineſs*, and draw others to imitate them? And why do you not commend the

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Good where you diſcommend the *evil* that is commixt?

4. Shall *Health* and *Life* be made a ſcorn, becauſe there are few but have ſome *diſtemper* or *diſeaſe*? Shall *Chriſtianity* and *Holineſs* be ſecretly reproached, becauſe all Chriſtians *have ſome* fault to be accuſed of? If men be *faulty*, you ſhould perſwade them to be *more ſtrict* and *diligent*, and not *leſs*: It is for *want* of watchfulneſs and ſtrictneſs that they *ſin*. Nothing is more contrary to their *faults*, then *Holineſs*. There is no other way for their full reformation. And therefore all true humbled Chriſtians are ready to confeſs their faultineſs themſelves; but ſo far are they from thinking the worſe of piety for it, that its one great reaſon that moveth them to go on, and to read, and hear, and pray, and meditate, and do ſo much that they may get more ſtrength againſt their faults. Muſt they think ill of food, and phyſick, and exerciſe, becauſe they

they are infirm? All faithful Ministers tell their people plainly of their sins (so far as they are acquainted with them) as well as you: But they do it not in a way reproachful to their holy diligence; They do not therefore call them off from Godliness, nor tempt them to be less in the use of means, but more by how much their need is greater. A holy heart, and a malignant heart, will shew their difference in the reproving of the same fault. The one layeth all the *odium* on the *vice*, & honoureth the *holy obedience* of the Saints. The other fasteneth his sting upon the *Godly*, and under pretence of dishonouring their *faults*, doth seek to fasten the dishonour on their *holiness*. And those that are so *minded*, will never want *occasion* or *pretence*, for the worst that Satan would have them say. The Church will never be without *some hypocrites*, and *scandals*, nor the best without *some faults* and *passions*; nor

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the *holiest* action without some mixture of *humane frailty* and infirmity; nor will the very *goodness* and *holiness* of the action, be free from plausible calumnies and scorns, while there is the *wit* and *venom* of the serpent in the *heads* and *hearts* of wicked men. How easie is it to put a name of ignominy upon every person and every duty? To charge any man with Hypocrisie or Pride? To take the wisest man for self-conceited, because he is not of the accusers mind? To call our *obedience to God*, by the name of *disobedience unto man*, when man forbids it, as they used the three witnesses, *Dan.* 3. and *Daniel* himself for praying in his house, *Dan.* 6. though they confessed they had nothing else against him? To call *Gods Truth* by the name of *Heresie*, and *Heresie* by the name of *Truth*, To charge all with *Schism*, that dare not subject their souls to the usurpation and arrogant impositions of

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the ſons of Pride, that have neither Authority nor Ability to Govern us, as the Papiſts deal by the greateſt part of the Chriſtian World? To *lay ſnares* for mens Conſciences, and then accuſe them for falling into thoſe ſnares? To make *new Articles of faith*, till they have tranſcended the capacity of *Divine* and *Rational belief*, and then condemn us for not believing them? To make *Laws* for the Church, *unneceſſary* in their own opinion, and *ſinful* in other mens, and command things which they know that others think the Lord forbids, and then load them with the ſufferings and reproaches of the *diſobedient*, *turbulent*, *heretical*, *ſchiſmatical*, or *ſeditious*? To call men *factious*, if they will not be of their *faction*? and *Sectaries*, if they will not unreaſonably ſubject their Souls to them, and joyn with an imperious *Sect*, againſt the *Catholick Unity* and *Simplicity*? All which the Romaniſts

mens practice upon the Church of Christ. How easie, but how *unreasonable*, and yet how *irresistible* is all this? How easie is it to call a *meeting of sober Christians, for prayer and mutual edification*, such as that was, *Acts* 12. 12. by the name of a *Factious Schismatical Conventicle*, and a meeting of *Drunkards*, or *Gamesters*, by a more gentle less disgraceful name? To say a man becomes a *Preacher*, when he modestly reproveth another for his sinnes, or charitable exhorteth him in order to his Salvation, or giveth any necessary plain instruction to his *Family*, for whom he must give account? Believe it, it will be a poor excuse to any man, that becomes an enemy to the diligence of a Saint, that he could thus cloak his malice, and cloath a Saint with the *vizer* of an *Hypocrite*, and the rags of any odious *Sect*.

If the *Pharisees* were to be believed, it was not *they*, but *Christ* that

that was the *Hypocrite*: nor was it the *Son of God*, but an *Enemy* to *Cæsar*, and a *Blasphemer* that they put to death. But will not Christ *know his sheep*, though he find them *torn in a wolfs skin?* You say it is *turbulent Presbyterians* that you strike; but what if Christ find but one of the *least of his Brethren bleeding* by it? It is but *Hypocrites* or *Schismaticks* that you reproach; but if Christ find an *humble serious Christian* suffering by your abuse, and you to answer it, I would not be in your coats for all the greatness, and honour that you shall have before your everlasting shame. If *Tertullus* accuse a *pestilent fellow, and a mover of Sedition*, and Christ find an *holy laborious Apostle in Bonds and suffering by it*, it is not his *names* that will excuse him, and make an *Apostle* or *Persecution* to be another thing.

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TO return to the endangered Flocks; Look upward first, and think whether Heaven be worth your labour! Look downwards, and think whether *Earth be more worthy of it*! Lay up your treasures where you must dwell for ever. If that be here, then scrape, and flatter, and get all that you can; But if it be not here, but in another life, then hearken to your Lord, and *lay up for your selves a treasure in Heaven*, and there let *your very hearts be set*, Matth. 6. 20, 21. And upon the peril of everlasting misery, hearken not to any man that wil tempt you from a diligent holy life. It is a serious businesse, deal seriously in it; and be not laught or mockt out of Heaven, by the flouts of a distracted sensual Atheist. If any of them will pretend to sobriety and wisdom, and undertake to prove that

that *God ſhould not be loved and ſerved*, and *your Salvation ſought with all your might*, and with greater care and diligence then any earthly thing, procure me a ſober conference with *that man*, and try whether I ſhall not prove him to be a befoold ſervant of the Devil, and a miſchievous enemy of your Salvation, and his own. O that we might have but ſober debates, inſtead of jeers, and ſcorns, and railings with this ſort of men! how quickly ſhould we ſhew you, that they muſt renounce the Scripture, and renounce *Chriſtianity*, and (if that be nothing with them) that they muſt renounce God, and renounce *right Reaſon*, and *unman* themſelves, if they will renounce a *holy Heavenly life*, and blame them that make it their *principal buſineſs* in the world, to prepare for the world to come.

But if they will not be entreated to ſuch a *ſober conference*, will you

you that hear them, (if you care what becomes of you) but come *to us*, and hear what we can ſay for a *Holy life*, before you hearken to them; and let yonr ſouls have fair play, and ſhew that you have ſo much love to your ſelves, as not to caſt away Salvation at the deriſion of a fool, before you have heard the other ſide.

If I make not good the *ſtricteſt* Laws of God Almighty, againſt the moſt *ſubtil cavils* of any of the inſtruments of Satan, then tell me that *Infidels* or *Epicures* are in the right. Compare their words with the words of God. Conſider well but that one Text, 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. and tell me whether it ſuit with their Opinions, [*Seeing all theſe things muſt be diſſolved, what manner of perſons ought we to be in all manner of holy Converſation and Godlineſs; looking for, and haſting to the coming of the Day of God!*] Did theſe words but ſink into your

 hearts,

hearts, the next time you heard any man reproach a *Holy Heavenly life*, it would perhaps make you think of the words of *Paul* to ſuch another, *Acts* 13, 10. *O full of all ſubtilty and all miſchief, thou child of the Devil, thou enemy of all Righteouſneſs, wilt thou not ceaſe to pervert the right wayes of the Lord?*]

And if holineſs be evil ſpoken of by them that never tried it, what wonder! Chriſt hath foretold us that it muſt be ſo, *Matth.* 5. 11, 12. *Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly for my ſake. Rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven: for ſo perſecuted they the Prophets which were before you.*] John 15. 19, 20. [*If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but becauſe ye are not of the world, but I have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you, &c.*] 1 Pet. 4. 4, 5, 14. *They think it*

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ſtrange that they run not with them to the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you, who ſhall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead--------If ye be reproached for the Name of Chriſt, happy are ye; for the Spirit of Glory and of God reſteth upon you; On their part he is evil ſpoken of, but on your part he is glorified.] Seneca himſelf oft telleth us, that among the Heathen, Vertue was a deriſion, ſo far is the nature of man degenerated. The queſtion is not what you are called or taken to be, but what you are. [Intus teipſum conſidera (inquit Sen.) non qualis ſis aliis credas; Plerunque boni inepti & inertes vocantur. Mihi contingat iſte deriſus: Æquo animo audienda ſunt imperitorum convitia; & ad honeſta vadendi contemnendus eſt iſte contemptus.] that is, [Inwardly conſider of thy ſelf, and judge not what thou art by the words of others: For the moſt part good men are called fools and dullards: Let me be ſo de-

derided : The reproaches of the ignorant (or unskilful) must be patiently heard; and this contempt of one that followeth vertue, must be contemned.] Yea it is the higheſt honour to be content to be *accounted bad*, that we may not *be ſo*; and the greateſt tryal whether we be indeed ſincere, to be put to it, to be either *accounted Hypocrites*, or *to be ſuch*. Methinks I can ſcarce too oft recite that excellent ſaying of *Seneca*, *Epiſt.* 72. *Nemo plus videtur æſtimare virtutem, nemo magis illi eſſe devotus, quam qui beni viri famam perdidit, non conſcientiam perderet*] that is [*No man ſeems to ſet a higher price on vertue; no man ſeems to be more devoted to it, then he that hath loſt the reputation of being a good man, leſt he ſhould loſe his conſcience.*]

But perhaps you'l ask, *May not a man be righteous over-much?* as is intimated, *Eccl.* 7. 16.

I anſwer, it is *making a mans ſelf over-wiſe or righteous*, that is there reppoved. And no doubt but 1. man

take on them, or *make themſelves* more wiſe and righteous then they are: that is, *are hypocrites*. 2. As righteouſneſs is taken *materially* and in common eſtimation, ſo a man may be *too Righteous*. He may be *too rigorous*, which is called *Juſtice*; and too much in grief, or fear, or trouble, & too much in any outward act that goeth under the name of *duty*. But it is not then truly and formally *duty* and *righteouſneſs*, but *ſin*. As to faſt to the diſabling the body for Gods ſervice. To *pray* when we ſhould *hear*: To *hear* when we ſhould be about ſome *greater work* of *mercy* or *neceſſity*: To neglect our *outward labour* and calling on *pretence* of *Religion*: To ſet up *ſacrifice againſt* or *before mercy*: To *ſorrow* when we ſhould *rejoyce*: To *meditate*, and *fear*, and *grieve*, beyond what the *brain can bear*, till it diſtract us: This is called, *being righteous over-much*: As alſo to *make us a Religion* of our *own inventions*, and to *over-do* with *will-wor-*

ſhip and the *traditions* of men, as the Phariſees and Papiſts. But indeed this is not *Righteouſneſs*, but *ſin*: To be *formally over-much righteous*, is a contradiction, and impoſſible. For to go *beyond* the *Rule* is *unrighteouſneſs*: And to do *too much*, is to go beyond the *Rule*. Unleſs you dare imagine that *God* hath erred, and the *Rule* it ſelf is over-ſtrict, and the *Law* is unrighteous: But then *how ſhall God judge the world*? ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *Rom.* 3. 6. *Shall not the judge of all the world do righteouſly*? Gen. 18. 25. Nay how then ſhall he *be God*?

And is there any thing now left but *Ignorance* or *Wickedneſs* to ſtand up againſt thy ſpeedy diligence? Away then with thy *delayes* and *ſloathfulneſs*. If thou *wilt* ſerve God *with all thy might*, let it be ſeen; If thou *wilt* be a *Chriſtian indeed*, let *deeds* declare it. *Chriſtianity* is not a dead Opinion. If really thou live in hope of heaven, ſuch hopes will make thee *ſtir* for the *attainment*. Why

ſtandeſt

ſtandeſt thou *idle*, when thou art born for *work*, and all thy faculties are given thee for *work*, and thou art redeemed for *work*? (for *Evangelical work*.) If thou be *ſanctifiſed*, thou haſt the *Spirit of Chriſt*, a quickning working principle within thee; which way canſt thou look, but thou mayſt ſee that which would ſhame a ſloathful ſoul, and fire a cold and frozen heart, and call thee up to a ſpeedy induſtry? what quickning words ſhalt thou find in Scripture, if thou wilt but bring thy heart thither as one that is willing to be *quickened*? what *powerful commands*, what *promiſes*, what *threatnings*, what *holy examples* of exceeding diligence of Chriſt and his Apoſtles? See how the Godly about thee are at work, though the world *oppoſe* them and *deride* them! how *earneſtly* they pray! how *carefully* they walk! how ſadly they complain that they are *no better!* And haſt *thou not* an immortal ſoul to ſave or loſe as well as

they? See what a ſtir the *proud ambitious* perſon makes for leſs then nothing? what a ſtir the *covetous* and the *voluptuous* make for a ſweetned draught of mortal poyſon? And ſhall we be *idle* that are engaged for *Heaven?* Is it reaſon that we ſhould *do leſs for God* & our *ſalvation*, then *they* do for *ſinful pleaſure* to *damnation?* You cannot *mock them* out of their *Pride* and *Covetouſneſs:* And ſhall they *mock thee* out of thy *Religion*, and thy *hopes of Heaven?* All the commands, and promiſes, and threatnings of God, the moſt powerful preaching, that, as it were, ſets open Heaven and Hell to them, doth not prevail with fleſhly men, to leave the moſt ſordid and unmanly ſin: And ſhall the words or frowns of creeping duſt prevail with thee againſt the work for which thou liveſt in the world, when thou haſt ſtill at *hand unanſwerable arguments* from *God*, from thy *ſelf*, from *Heaven* and *Hell*, to put thee on?

on? Were it but for thy *Life*, or the *Life* of thy children, friend, yea or enemy, or for the quenching of a fire in thy houſe, or in the Town, wouldſt thou not ſtir and do thy beſt? And wilt thou be idle when eternal life lies on it? Let Satan bawl againſt thee by his inſtruments. Let ſenſleſs ſinners talk awhile of they know not what, till God have made them change their note. Let what will be the conſequent to thy fleſh. Theſe are not matters for a man much to obſerve, that is engaged for an *endleſs life*. O what are theſe to the things that thou art called to proſecute! Hold on then Chriſtians in the work that you have begun. Do it *prudently*, and do it *univerſally*. Take it *together*, both works of *Piety*, *Juſtice*, and *Charity*: But do it *now* without delay, and do it *ſeriouſly* with your *might*. I know not what cloud of darkneſs hath ſeized on thoſe mens minds that ſpeak againſt this; or what deadly damp hath

ſeized on their hearts, that hath ſo benummed and unmanned them. For my own part; though I have long lived in a ſenſe of the preciouſneſs of time, and have not been wholly idle in the world; yet when I have the deepeſt thoughts of the great everlaſting conſequents of my work, and of the uncertainty and ſhortneſs of my time, I am even amazed to think that my heart can be ſo ſlow and ſenſleſs, as to *do no more in ſuch a caſe*. The Lord knows, and my accuſing wounded Conſcience knows, that my ſloathfulneſs is ſo much my ſhame and admiration, that I am aſtoniſhed to think that my *reſolutions* are no *ſtronger*, my *affections* no *livelier*, and my *labour* and *diligence* no *greater*, when *God* is the *Commander*, and *his Love* the encourager, and his *wrath* the ſpur, and *Heaven* or *Hell* muſt be the iſſue. O what lives ſhould all of us live, that have things of ſuch unſpeakable conſequence on our hands, if our

hearts

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14.13. O that I had more of this derided diligence, and holy converſe with the Lord, though my name were caſt out as an evil-doer, *Luk.* 6. 22. and I were ſpit at, and buffetted by thoſe that do now but ſecretly reproach! Might I nearly follow Chriſt in holineſs, why ſhould I grudge to bear his Croſs, and to be uſed as he was uſed? *Mat.* 26.27. *Luke* 18.32. knowing that *if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him*; and *the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. 17, 18.

If when we have done all, we are but *unprofitable Servants*, and muſt ſay, we *have done but our duty*, Luke 17. 10. have we not all more need of monitors to humble us for doing ſo much leſſe then our duty, then to be reprehended for being too diligent and exact?

I again proteſt, that it is not any works of Supererogation, or humane invention,

invention, ſuperſtition, or ſelf-appointment that I am defending, but only the accurate obeying of the Laws of God, and the utmoſt diligence in ſuch obedience, for the obtaining of everlaſting life. Either God hath commanded theſe works of Holineſs, Juſtice, and Charity, or not. If he *have not*, then I have done, and yeild the cauſe; It is only *what he hath commanded* that I plead for. O that before you either ſpeak againſt any *Holy duty*, or your ſelves neglect it, you would but come to us, and ſoberly joyn in ſearching the *Holy Scriptures*, to ſee whether it be *required there* or *not*; and reſolve but to obey it, if we prove it thence: and if it be but matter of humane impoſition, we leave you to your ſelves, and ſhould deſire that you may be much left to your liberty in ſuch things; and that you place not too much of your Religion therein. But if indeed it be *commanded in the word of God*, I beſeech you, as you are

Chriſtians

Christians, & as you are *men*, remember that when ever *you blame* or *scorn* a holy *duty*, it is *God himself* that you *blame* or *scorn*. If it be *naught*, it is long of him that did *command it*. The *Subject* must obey; should not such worms as we, obey the infinite God that made us? If it be a *fault to obey*, it is a *duty to rebel*, or *disobey*; and that must be because that God hath *no authority to command*, & that must be *because he is not God*. See whether you bring your opposition to a *holy life*; And dare not you stand to this? Dare you as openly mock God for *making these strict* and *holy Laws*, as you do *men* for *obeying* them? None but a professed Atheist dare.

Alas Sirs, it is nothing but *intoxicating prosperity*, and *sensual delights*, and *worldly diversions*, that turn your brains, and leave you not the sober use of Reason, that makes you think well of ungodly sloathfulness, and makes you think so contemptuously or senselesly of a *heavenly life*. I tell you

you (& remember another day that you were told of it) that there is not the boldeſt Infidel in the world, nor the bittereſt enemy to *holineſs* in this Aſſembly, but ſhortly would wiſh they had rather been Saints in rags, with all the ſcorn and cruelty that malice can inflict on ſuch, then to have braved it out in pride and gallantry, with the neglect of the great everlaſting things. I tell you again, there is not an ungodly wretch that heareth me, but ere long would give a world if he were owner of a holy heart and life, that he had ſpent his days in holy watchful preparations for his change, which he ſpent for that which will deceive him and forſake him.

Methinks I even ſee how you will paſſionately rage againſt your ſelves, and tear your hearts with ſelf-revenge, (if grace prevent it not by a more ſafe repentance) when you think too late how you lived on earth, and what golden times of

grace

grace you loſt, and vilified all that would not loſe them as foliſhly as you. If Repentance unto life made *Paul* ſo call himſelf *fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, and exceeding mad*, Tit. 3. 3. Acts 26. 11.) you may imagine how *tormenting Repentance* will make you *call your ſelves* too late.

O Sirs, you cannot now conceive, while you ſit here in health, and eaſe, and honour, what different thoughts will *then* poſſeſs you of a holy and an unholy life! How mad you will think them that had but *one lifes time* of *preparation* for *eternal life*, and deſperately neglected it: And how ſenſible you will *then be* of the *wiſdom* of *Believers*, that knew their *Time*, & *uſed it* while they had it! *Now wiſdom is juſtified of all her children*: but *then* how ſenſibly will it be juſtified of all its *enemies!* O with what gripes will undone ſouls look back on a life of mercy and opportunities, thus baſely undervalued, and ſlept away in dreaming idleneſs,

&

& fooled away for things of nought.

The language of that damned rich man, *Luk.* 16. may *help* you in your *predictions*. O how you wil wonder at your ſelves, that ever you could be ſo blind and ſenſleſſe, as to be no more affected with the warnings of the Lord, and with the forethoughts of everlaſting joy or miſery! To have but one *one ſmall part* of *time* to do all *that ever muſt be done* by you for Eternity, and *ſay all that ever you muſt ſay* for your own or others ſouls, and that this was ſpent in worſe then nothing! To have but *One uncertain life*, in which you muſt run the race that wins or loſeth Heaven for ever; & that you ſhould be tempted by a thing of nought, to loſe that *one* irrecoverable opportunity, and to ſit ſtill, or run another *way*, when you ſhould have been *making haſt with all your might*! O ſirs, the thoughts of this will be other-*kind* of thoughts another day then now you feel them; you cannot now

think

think how the thoughts of this will then affect you! That you *had a time* in which you might have pray'd, with promiſe of acceptance, and had not hearts to *take that time!* That Chriſt was offered you as well as he was offered them that entertained him; that you were called on and warn'd as well as they, but obſtinately deſpiſed and neglected all! That Life and Death were ſet before you, and the everlaſting joyes were offered to your choice, againſt the charms of ſinful Pleaſures, and you might, have freely had them if you would, and were told that Holineſs was the only way, and that it muſt be *Now* or *Never*, and yet that you *choſe* your own deſtruction! Theſe thoughts will be *part of Hell* to the ungodly. They will wonder that *Reaſon* could be ſo *unreaſonable*, and they that had the common wit of man in other matters, ſhould be ſo far beſide themſelves in that which is the only thing that its commendable

dable to be wiſe for; that ſuch ſottiſh *Reaſonings* ſhould prevail with them againſt the cleareſt light, and *nothing* ſhould be preferred before *all things*, and arguments fetcht from *chaff* and *dung*, ſhould conquer thoſe that were fetcht from *Heaven*! O what heart-renting thoughts will theſe be, when Eternity ſhall afford them leiſure for an impartial review! Yea that they ſhould deceive others alſo with ſuch a groſs deceit, and ſcorn at all that would not be as mad as they: that being drunken with the worlds deluſion, they ſhould abuſe all that were truly ſober; that the one thing *needfull*, ſhould ſeem to them a *needleſs thing*! That their tongues ſhould plead for theſe deluſions of their wicked hearts, and they ſhould be enemies to thoſe that would not be enemies to God, and to themſelves, and caſt away their Time and Souls as they did! They will *wonder* with ſelf-indignation, what could bewitch them

them into ſo *great* unreaſonableneſs, below a man, againſt the *light of nature*, as well as of ſupernatural revelation.

Honourable and beloved Hearers, I beſeech you do not take it ill, that I ſpeak ſo much of theſe matters that are ſo unpleaſant and unwelcome to unbelieving, careleſs, carnal hearts: It is that I may prevent all this in time, by the awakenings of true Repentance: And O that this might be the ſucceſs! That I might hear by your penitent Confeſſions, and ſee by your univerſal ſpeedy reformation, that God hath ſo great Mercy for you, & that theſe perſwaſions might be the means of ſo much Happineſſe to you, and comfort unto me! However *this Aſſembly* ſhall be *witneſſes* that you were warned: and *Conſcience* ſhall be witneſs, that if you waſt the reſt of your dayes in the pleaſures and vanities of this deceitful world, it was not becauſe you *could have no better*,

better, and were not *called* to higher things. That if you *yet ſtand idle*, it is not becauſe you could not be *hired*. For in the name of Chriſt I have called you into his vineyard, and told you of your work and wages, and aſhamed your excuſes and objections this day. Come away then ſpeedily from the ſnares of ſinners, and the Company of deceived hardened men, and caſt away the works of darkneſſe! Heaven is before you! Death is at hand: The Eternal God hath ſent to call you! Mercy doth yet ſtretch forth its arms! You have ſtaid too long, and abuſed Patience too much already: Stay no longer! O now pleaſe God, and comfort us, and ſave your ſelves by *Reſolving that this ſhall be the Day*: and *faithfully performing of this your Reſolution*, *Up and be doing*: Believe, Repent, Deſire, Obey, and do all this with all your *Might*. Love him that you muſt Love for ever, and Love him with all your

Soul

Soul and Might; ſeek that which is truly worth the ſeeking, and it will pay for all your coſt and pains: And ſeek it firſt with all *your Might*: Remembring ſtill it muſt be *Now* or *Never*.

BEfore I conclude, I have two meſſages yet to deliver to the ſervants of the Lord: The *One* is of *Encouragement*: The *Other* of *Direction*.

I know that many of you have a *threefold trouble*, which requireth a *threefold comfort* and encouragement.

One is, that you have done ſo little of your work; but loſt ſo much of your time already: Another is, that you are ſo oppoſed and hindred. And the greateſt of all is, that you are yet ſo dull and ſlow: The cure of which muſt be the matter of my *Directions*.

1. For the first: That you have lost your Time, must be the matter of your Humiliation: But that all is not lost, before you see your sin and duty; but yet the patience and mercy of the Lord are attending you, and continuing your hope; this is the *matter of your comfort and encouragement.* Repent therefore that you came no sooner home: But rejoyce that you are come home at last: and now be more diligent in redeeming your time, in remembrance of the time already lost; And though it must be your grief, that your Master hath been deprived of so much as his service, and others of so much good which you should have done them, and that time is lost that cannot be recalled; yet it is your comfort, that your own Reward may be equal with them that have born the burthen and heat of the day: For many that are last (in the time

time of their coming in) ſhall be firſt (in receiving their reward.) This is the meaning of that Parable in *Mat.* 20. which was ſpoken to encourage them that had ſtood out too long, and to rebuke the envie, and high expectations of them that came in ſooner: and it is no whit contradictory to thoſe paſſages in *Matth.* 25. which intimate a different degree of glory to be given to them that have different degrees of Grace upon their induſtrious improvement. The one Parable *Matth.* 20. ſhews that men ſhall not be rewarded differently for their longer or ſhorter continuance in the work, but that thoſe that came in late, and yet are found with equal holineſs, ſhall be rewarded equally with the firſt: And more, if their holineſs be more, which the ſecond Parable expreſſeth, declaring Gods purpoſe to give them the greateſt Glory,

that have improved their Holineſs to the greateſt Meaſure. O therefore that the ſenſe of your former unkindneſs might provoke you the more reſolvedly to give up your ſelves in fervent love, and full obedience! and then you will find that your Time is Redeemed, though it cannot be recalled; and that Mercy hath ſecured your full reward. O what an unſpeakable Mercy is this! that if yet you will devote your ſelves entirely to Chriſt, and ſerve him with your might, the little time that yet remains, he will take it as if you had come in at the firſt hour of the day!

2. And as for the Oppoſition and hinderances in your way, they are no other then what your Lord foretold. He hath gone before you, and conquered much more then ever you will encounter from without (though he

had not a body of ſin to conquer: and in that reſpect the conqueſt of his *Spirit* in his *members*, hath the preheminence of his perſonal conqueſt.) He hath bid you *Be of good chear*, becauſe he hath overcome the World. If you will not take up your croſs and follow him, you cannot be his Diſciples, *Joh.* 16. 33. *Luk.* 14. 27, 33. Would you be *ſoldiers* on condition you *may not fight*; or *fight*, and yet have no *oppoſition*? Follow the Captain of your ſalvation. If mocking, or buffeting, or ſpitting in his face, or hanging him upon a Croſs, or piercing his ſide, would have made him give up the work of your Redemption, you had been left to utter deſperation. The oppoſition that is *conquerable*, ſhould ſerve but to excite your *courage* and *reſolution*, in a caſe of ſuch *neceſſity* where you *muſt prevail*, or *periſh*. Have you God himſelf on your ſide,

ſide, *Rom.* 8. 31. and Chriſt your Captain, and the Spirit of Chriſt to give you courage, and the Promiſe to invite you, and Heaven before you, and Hell behind you, and the examples of ſuch an Army of conquering Believers: and ſhall the *ſcorns* or *threats* of a crawling Worm prevail againſt all theſe for your diſcouragement? You are not afraid leſt any man ſhould pull down the *Sun*, or dry up the *Sea*, or overturn the *Earth*: And are you afraid that Man ſhould *conquer* God? *Rom.* 8. 37. or take you out of the hands of Chriſt? *Joh.* 10. 28. 39. Mark how they uſed *David*, Pſal. 56. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Every day they wreſt my words: all their thoughts are againſt me for evil: They gather themſelves together: they hide themſelves: they mark my ſteps when they wait for my ſoul.*] But what did he therefore *fear* or *fly* from God? No, [*What time I am afraid, I will truſt in thee; In God will I*

praiſe his word; In God have I put my truſt; I will not fear what fleſh can do unto me] Iſa. 51. 7, 8. [*Hearken to me; ye that know righteouſneſs, the people in whoſe heart is the Law; Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings; For the moth ſhall eat them up like a garment, and the worm ſhall eat them like wool: but my Righteouſneſs ſhall be for ever, and my Salvation from generation to generation.*] You deſerve to be ſhut out of Heaven, if you will not bear the breath of a fools deriſion for it.

3. But (ſaith the ſelf-accuſing ſoul) *I am convinced that I ought to be laborious for my ſalvation, and that all this is too little that I can do: but I am dull, and cold, and negligent in all: I am far from doing it with my might: I hear, and read, and pray, as if I did it not, and as if I were half aſleep, or my heart were away upon ſomewhat elſe. I fear I am but a lazy hypocrite.*]

Anſw.

Answ. I shall first speak to thy *doubt*, and then to direct thee against thy sin.

And first, you must be resolved whether your sloath be such as is *predominant*, or *Mortifi'd*: such as proveth that you are dead in sin, or onely such as proveth you but *diseased* and *infirm*.

And to know this, you must distinguish 1. Between the *dulness* and coldness of the *Affections*, and the *unresolvedneſſe* and *Disobedience* of the soul. 2. Between a sloathfulness that keepeth men *from a godly life* in a life of wickedness, and that which only keepeth them from some particular act of duty, or abateth the degree of their sincere affection and obedience. 3. Between that sloath that is the vicious habit of the *Will*; and that which is the *effect of age*, or *sickness*, or *melancholy*, or other distemper of the body.

And so the case lieth plain before you. 1. If it be not only your affecti-

ons that are dull, but your will through ſloath is *unreſolved*; and this not only in a temptation to the abatement of ſome degrees, and the neglect of ſome particular duty, but againſt a *holy life*, and againſt the *forſaking of your reigning ſin*; and this be not only through ſome *bodily diſtemper*, diſabling your *Reaſon*, but from the *vicious Habit* of your *Wills*: then is your *ſloath* a *mortal* ſign, and proves you in a graceleſs ſtate: But if the ſloath which you complain of, be onely the dulneſs of your *affections*, and the *backwardneſs* of your *wills*, to ſome *high degrees*, or *particular duties*, and the effect of ſome bodily diſtemper, or the weakneſs of your ſpiritual life, while your *wills* are *habitually reſolved for God, and a holy life*, againſt a *worldly fleſhly life*. This is your *infirmity*, and a ſin to be lamented, but not a mark of death and graceleſſneſs.

You *will* have a *backward ſloathfull*

full heart to *ſtrive* with while you live; but bleſs God that you are offended with it, and would fain be delivered. This was *Paul's* evidence, *Rom.* 7. 24. You will *have fleſh*, and fleſh will plead for its intereſt, and will be ſtriving againſt the Spirit; but bleſs God that you have alſo the Spirit to ſtrive againſt the fleſh. Be thankfull that you have life to feel your ſickneſs, though you languiſh under it, and cannot work as healthfull men; and that you are in the way to Heaven, though you go not ſo faſt as you ſhould and would.

2. But yet, though you have *Life*, it is ſo grievous to be *diſeaſed*, and languiſh under ſuch an infirmity as ſloath, that I adviſe you to ſtir up your ſelves to the utmoſt, and give not way to a lazie temper; and that you may ſerve the Lord with all your might, I recommend theſe few Directions to your obſervation.

Dir. 1. When you would be quickened up to ſeriouſneſſe and diligence, *Have ready at hand ſuch quickning Conſiderations, as are here before propounded to you, and ſet them before you, and labour to work them upon your hearts.* Powerful truths would have ſome power upon your ſouls, if you will but ſoberly apply your reaſons to them and plead them with your ſelves, as you would do with another, in any of your reproofs or exhortations.

Dir. 2. *Take heed leſt any worldly deſign or intereſt, or any luſt or ſenſual delight, divert your minds from God and duty.* For all the powers of your ſoul will languiſh, when you ſhould ſet them on work on ſpiritual things, and your hearts will be abroad, when you ſhould be wholly taken up with God, if once they be entangled with worldly things. Watch therefore over them in your Callings, leſt the

the creature ſteal too deep into your affections: For if you be alive to the world, you will be in that meaſure dead to God.

Dir. 3. *If it be poſſible, live under a lively Miniſtry, that when your hearts go cold and dull unto the Aſſemblies, they may come warm and quickned home.* Life cheriſheth life, as fire kindleth fire. The Word and Ordinances of God are quick, powerful, and ſharper then any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts, *Heb.* 4. 12. and therefore it may do much to make you feel. Many a thouſand hath it pricked at the heart, and ſent them home alive, that before were dead, *Acts* 2. 37. Much more may you expect that it ſhould excite the principles which you have already.

Dir. 4. *If it may be, converſe with*

lively, active, ſtirring Chriſtians; but eſpecially have *one ſuch* for a *boſome Friend*, that will warm you when you are cold, and help to awake you when you drop a ſleep, and will not comply with you in a declining, lazie, and unprofitable courſe, *Eccleſ.* 4. 9, 10, 11. *Two are better then one, becauſe they have a good reward for their labour: For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat; but how can one alone be warm? And if one prevail againſt him, two ſhall withſtand him; and a threefold cord is not eaſily broken.*

Dir. 5. *Put not away from you the day of death. Look not for long life.* It is the life to come that muſt be the life of all your duties here: and diſtant things do loſe their force. Set death, and judgment,

and

and eternall life continually as near at hand; live in a watchfull expectation of your change, do all as dying men, and as paſſing to receive the recompence of endleſſe joy or woe; and this will quicken you. To this end, go often to the *houſe of mourning*, and be not unſeaſonably or immoderately in the Houſe of Mirth. When you obſerve what is the end of all men, the heart will be made better by it, *Eccleſ.* 7. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. But exceſs of carnal mirth doth infatuate men, and deſtroy their wiſdom, ſeriouſneſs and ſobriety. Keep always a ſenſe of the brevity of Life, and of the preciouſneſs of Time, and remember that it is poſting on whether you work or play. Methinks, if you forget any of the reſt, this one conſideration that we have in hand, ſhould make you beſtir you with *your Might*, that, *It muſt be now or Never.*

I

I ſhall only add two needful *Cautions*, leſt while we cure one diſeaſe, we cauſe another (as knowing that corrupted-nature is uſed to run from extream into extream.

1. *Deſire and labour more for an high eſtimation of things ſpiritual and eternal, and a fixed reſolution, and an even and diligent endeavour, then for paſſionate feelings and affections.* For *theſe latter* are more unconſtant in the beſt, and depend much on the temper of the body, & are not of ſo great neceſſity as the former, though excellent in a juſt degree and ſeaſon. For its poſſible that paſſions even about good things may be too much, when *Eſtimation*, *Reſolution*, and regular *Endeavours*, cannot.)

2. *Be ſuſpicious when you have the warmeſt and livelieſt Affections, leſt your judgments ſhould be perverted by following when they ſhould lead.* It's very common for *Zeal* and

and *ſtrong Affections*, even to that which is *good*, to occaſion the *miſtakes* of the *underſtanding*, and make men look *all on one ſide*, and think they can *never go far enough* from ſome *particular ſins*, till ignorantly they are carried into ſome perhaps as great on the *other hand*. Be warned by the ſad experience of *theſe times*, to ſuſpect your *judgements* in the fervour of your affections.

And obſerving *theſe cautions*, let nothing abate your *Zeal* and *Diligence*, but whatever *Duty* is ſet before you, do it with your *Might: for it muſt be Now or Never.*

THough I know that the enmity to a holy, heavenly life is ſo radicated in corrupted nature, that all that I have ſaid is neceſſary and too little; yet ſome I know will think it ſtrange that I ſhould intimate, that any that preach the Goſpel are guilty

ty of any measure of this sin, and will think that I intend by it to reflect upon some parties above the rest. But again I profess, that it is no party but the Devills party, and the ungodly party, that I mean: and its hard if you will not beleve me concerning my own sense. Nor is it my desire that any of the odiousness of Schism, Sedition, Rebellion, or disobedience to Authority, should be so much as diminished by any mens profession of godliness. No, I beseech you, by how much the more godly you are, by so much the more detest all these; godlinesse tendeth to shame & condemn these odious sins, and not to be a cloak for them or any extenuation. Nay, what can more aggravate them, then that they should be found in the professors of godliness? I again profess that I have no design but to plead for *serious* diligence in the Religion which we are all agreed in, and to

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ſtop the mouth of thoſe that wickedly ſpeak againſt it.

But alas! it is too evident that I have too many to ſpeak to that are not innocent; why elſe doth Scripture tell us that ſuch there will be ſtill to the end of the world? and that there is ſome that preach Chriſt of ſtrife and envy, to add affliction to the bonds of the afflicted! And how came holy Mr. *Bolton* to find ſo much work for theſe rebukes ſo lately in his time, as in his books you find? And can we already forget what abundance of *Antinomian* Teachers were among us, that turned out the very doctrine of practical diligence, and crying it down as a ſetting up our ſelves and our own works, and as injurious to free grace; and under pretence of exalting Chriſt did ſet up an heartleſs, lifeleſs doctrine, that tended to turn out the life of a Chriſtianity, and take men off their neceſſary diligence

as a legal dangerous thing?

And what Ordinance of God hath not been caſt out by Preachers themſelves upon Religious pretences, Family-Duties, Catechiſing, Singing of Pſalms, Baptiſm, the Lords Supper, and which not? And if all theſe were down, wherein ſhould the practice of Religion conſiſt? And what abundance of Pamphlets had we that laboured to make the Orthodox, faithfull Miniſtry a very ſcorn, and deride them for their faithful ſervice of God, and their faithfulneſs to their Superiors, inoppoſition to their unrighteous ways? I am loath to blot my papers, and trouble your ears with the names of the *Martin*-mar-prieſts, and a multitude of ſuch others which I mean.

And let no Papiſt, or any enemy of our Church, reproach us, becauſe ſuch enemies to Holineſs are found among us. Can it be expected that

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our Church ſhould be better than the Family of *Adam*, that had a *Cain*? or of *Noah*, that had a *Cham*? or of Chriſt, that had a *Judas*? And are there not far more enemies to ſerious godlineſs among the Papiſts themſelves, then among us? One inſtance out of the Life of *Philip Nerius*, the Father of the Oratorians, I will put into the Preface, becauſe it is too long to be here inſerted. There is no place, nor rank of men in the world, where ſome of the enemies of an holy life are not to be found, even among thoſe that profeſs the ſame Religion in Doctrinals, with thoſe whom they oppoſe. Chriſt and the Devil have their ſeveral Armies; and if once the Devil disband his Souldiers, and have none to oppoſe a holy life, then tell me that its a needleſs thing to defend it, and to confute them. But I am liſted under Chriſt, & will never give over pleading for him, till his ad-

adverſaries give over pleading againſt him, and his cauſe, as long as he continueth my liberty and duty. And bleſſed be the Lord, that if an Hypocritical Preacher be found among us, that ſecretly or openly diſgraceth a diligent holy life, there are more able, holy faithful ones to confute him both by Doctrine, and by their Lives, then are to be found in any other Kingdom in the world proportionally, that ever I could hear of. And that the faithful Diſciples are ſo many, and the *Judas's* ſo few, how great a bleſſing is it to this Land, and how great an honour to his Majeſties Government, and to the Church in his Dominions? The Lord teach this ſinful Nation to be thankful, and pardon their ingratitude, and never deprive them of this forfeited mercy. The Lord teach them to hearken to the Friends, and not to the Enemies of Holineſs, and never to receive a wound at the heart

heart of their Religion, however they hear their ſmaller differences about things circumſtantial.

And now I ſhould conclude, I am *loth to end*, for fear leſt I have not yet prevailed with you: What are you now *reſolved to do* from this day forward? It is *work* that we have been ſpeaking of, and *neceſſary work* of endleſs conſequence, which *muſt* be done, and quickly done, and throughly done. Are you not convinced that *it is ſo?* that plowing and ſowing are not more neceſſary to your harveſt, then the work of holineſs, in this day of grace, is neceſſary to your ſalvation? You are blind if you ſee not this: you are dead if you feel it not: what then will you do? For Gods ſake, and for your own ſake, ſtand not demurring till time be gone. It is all that the Devil deſireth, if he can but find you one thing or other to be thinking, and talking, and doing about, to keep

you

you from this till time be gone; and then he will insult over you, & then he that kept you from seeing and feeing, will help you to see and feel to your calamity: Then the *Devil* will make you feel that which Preachers could not make you feel: and he will make you think of that, and lay it close enough to your hearts, which we could not get you to lay to heart. Now we study and preach to you in hope, but then (alas it breaks our hearts to think of it) we have done with you for ever, because all hope is gone. Then the Devil may challenge a Minister: [Now do thy worst to bring this sinner to repentance; Now call to him to consider, and believe, and come to Christ; Now offer him mercy, and intreat him to accept it; Now cry to him to take heed of sin and of temptations, that he comes not to this place of torments; Now tell him of the beauty or necessity of ho-

holineſs, and call upon him to *Turn* and *Live*; Now do thy worſt to reſcue him from my power, and to ſave his ſoul.] Alas poor ſinner! will you ſtop your ears, and go on in ſin, and damn your ſelves, and break our hearts to fore-ſee that day! Muſt we ſee the Devil go away with ſuch a prey, and ſhall we not reſcue your captivated ſouls, becauſe you will not hear, you will not ſtir, you will not conſent! O hear the God of Heaven if you will not hear us, who calleth to you, *Return* and *Live!* Oh hear him that ſhed his blood for ſouls and tendereth you now ſalvation by his blood! O hear without any more delay, before all is gone, and you are gone, and he that now deceiveth you, torment you! Yet hold on a little longer in a carnal, earthly, unſanctified ſtate, and it is too late to hope, to pray, or ſtrive for your ſalvation: Yet a little longer, and mercy will have done with you for ever;

ever; and Chriſt will never invite you more, nor never offer to cleanſe you by his Blood, or ſanctifie you by his Spirit! Yet a little longer, and you ſhall never hear a Sermon more, and never more be troubled with thoſe Preachers that were in good ſadneſs with you, and longed once for your converſion and ſalvation! O ſleepy dead-hearted ſinners, what ſhould I do to ſhow you how near you ſtand to Eternity, and what is now doing in the world that you are going to, & how theſe things are thought on there! What ſhould I do to make you know how Time is valued, how ſin and holineſſe are eſteemed in the world where you muſt live for ever! What ſhould I do to make you know thoſe things to day, which I will not thank you to know when you are gone hence! O that the Lord would open your eyes in time! Could I but make you know theſe things as believers ſhould know

know them, I ſay not as thoſe that *ſee them*, nor yet as *dreamers*, that do not regard them, but as thoſe that believe that they muſt ſhortly ſee them; what a joyfull hours work ſhould I eſteem this! how happy would it be to you and me, if every word were accompanied with tears! If I followed you home and beg'd your Conſideration on my bear knees, or as a beggar begs an alms at your doors, If this Sermon coſt me as many cenſures or ſlanders as ever Sermon did, I ſhould not think it too dear, if I could but help you to ſuch a ſight of the things we ſpeak of, that you might truly underſtand them as they are: that you had but a true awakned apprehenſion of the ſhortneſſe of your day, of the nearleſs of eternity, and of the endleſs conſequence of your preſent work; and what holy labour and ſinful loytering will be thought of in the world to come for ever! But when

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we ſee you ſin, and trifle, and no more regard your endleſs life, and ſee alſo what haſte your Time is making, and yet cannot make you underſtand theſe things; when we know our ſelves as ſure as we ſpeak to you, that you will ſhortly be aſtoniſhed at the review of your preſent ſloth and folly, and when we know that theſe matters are not thought of in another world, as they are among the ſleepy or the bedlam ſinners here, and yet know not how to *make you know it*, whom it doth ſo exceeding much concern; *this* amazeth us, and almoſt breaks our hearts! Yea, when we tell you of things that are *paſt doubt*, and can be no further matter of controverſie, then men have ſold their underſtandings, & betrayed their reaſon to their ſordid luſts, and yet we cannot get reaſonable men to know that which they cannot chooſe but know, to know that ſeriouſly and

and practically, which alwayes hath a witneſs in their breaſts, and which none but the profligate dare deny: I tell you ſinners, this, even this is worſe then a priſon to us; it is you that are our perſecutors; it is you that are the *daily ſorrow* of our *hearts*; its you that diſappoint us of our hopes, and make us loſe ſo much of the labour of our lives! And if all others did as ſome do by us, alas how ſad an employment ſhould we have! and how little would it trouble us to be ſilenced and laid aſide! If we were ſick of the ambitious or covetous thirſt, we ſhould then ſay that it is they that deny us wealth and honour that diſappoint us. But if we are Chriſtians, this is not our caſe, but it is the thirſt after your converſion and ſalvation which affecteth us: and therefore it is you, even you that linger in your ſins and delay repentance, and forget your home, and neglect your ſouls, it is

you that diſappoint us, and you that are our afflicters; and as much as you think you befriend us when you plead our cauſe againſt men of violence and rage, it is you that ſhall anſwer for the loſs of our time, and labour, and hope, *and for the grieving* of your Teachers hearts.

Sinners, what ever the Devil and raging paſſion may ſay againſt a holy life, God and your own conſciences ſhall be our witneſſes, that we deſired nothing unreaſonable, or unneceſſary at your hands. I know it is the maſter-piece of the Devils craft, when he cannot keep all Religion in contempt, to raiſe up a duſt of controverſie in the world about names, and forms, and circumſtances in Religion, that he may keep men buſily ſtriving about theſe, while Religion it ſelf is neglected or unknown; and that he may make men believe that they have ſome Religion, becauſe they are for one ſide or other in

in these controversies: and especially that he may entice men to number the substantials of Religion it self among these lesser doubtful points, and make sinners believe that it is but the precise opinion of one party that they reject, while they reject the serious practice of all true Religion. And so the Devil gets more by these petty quarrels and controversies, occasioned by contentious empty men, then he could have done by the open opposition of Infidels, Heathens, or the prophane: So that neither I, nor any man that *opinionative* men have a mind to quarrel with, can tell how to exhort *you* to the very practice of Christianity it self, but you are presently casting your thoughts upon some points wherein we are reported to differ from *you*, or remembring some clamours of malicious men, that prejudice against the person of the speaker, make keep your souls

from profiting *to salvation* by the doctrine which even your selvs profess.

If this be the case of any one of you, I do not mean your consciences shall so scape the power or evidence of the truth. Dost thou talk of our differences about Forms and Ceremonies? Alas man! what's that to the message which we come about to thee, what is that to the business that we are preaching of? The question that I am putting to you, is not whether you will be for this form of Church-Government or for that, for a Ceremony or against it; but it is, whether you will hearken in time to God and conscience, and be as busie to provide for Heaven as ever you have been to provide for Earth? and whether you will set your selves to do the work that you are Created and Redeemed for? This is the business that I am sent to call you to; what say you? will you do it, and do it seriously without delay? You shall not

not be able to ſay, that I called you to a party, a faction, or ſome opinion of my own, or laid your ſalvation upon ſome doubtful controverſie. No ſinner, thy conſcience ſhall have no ſuch ſhift for its deceit: It is godlineſſe, ſerious and practical godlineſs that thou art called to. It is nothing but what all *chriſtians* in the world, both *Papiſts* & *Greeks*, & *Proteſtants*, and all the parties among thoſe that are *true chriſtians*, are agreed in the *profeſſion* of. That I may not *leave thee* in any *darkneſs* which *I can deliver thee from*, Ile tell *thee* diſtinctly, though ſuccinctly, what it is that thou art thus importuned to; and tell me then whether it be that which *any chriſtian can make doubt of*.

1. That which I intreat of thee is, but to live as one, that verily believeth there is a God, and that this God is the Creator, the Lord, and Ruler of the world; and that it is incomparably more of our buſi-

neſs to underſtand and obey his Laws, and as faithful Subjects to be conformed to them, then to obſerve or be conformed to the Laws of Man: And to live as men that do believe, that this God is Almighty, and the greateſt of men are leſs then crawling worms to him; and that he is infinitely wiſe, and the wiſdom of man is fooliſhneſs to him; and that he is infinitely good and amiable, and the beſt of creatures is dung and filth in compariſon of him; and that his love is the only felicity of man, and that none are happy but thoſe that do enjoy it, and none that do enjoy it can be miſerable; and that riches, and honors, and fleſhly delights are brutiſh vanities in compariſon of the eternal love of God. Live but as men that heartily believeth all this, and I have that I come for. And is any of this a matter of

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controverſie or doubt? not among Chriſtians I am ſure: not among wiſe men. It is no doubt to thoſe in heaven, nor to thoſe in hell, not to thoſe that have not loſt underſtanding upon earth, they Live then according to theſe truths.

2. Live as men that verily believe, that *Mankind is fallen into ſinne and miſery*, and that all men are corrupted, and under the condemnation of the Law of God, till *they* are delivered, pardoned, reconciled to God, and made new creatures by a renewing, reſtoring ſanctifying change. Live but as men that believe that this cure muſt be wrought, and this great reſtoring change muſt be made upon your ſelves, if it be not done *already*. Live as men that have ſo great a work to *look* after. And is this a matter of *any* doubt or coutroverſie? ſure it is not to a Chriſtian: and me-thinks it ſhould not be to *any* man elſe

that knoweth *himself*, any more then to a man in a *dropsy*, whether he be diseased, when he feels the thirst, and sees the swelling. Did you but know what cures and changes are necessarily to be made upon your diseased miserable souls; if you care what becomes of them, you would soon see cause to look about you. 3. Live but as men that verily believe that you are *Redeemed by the Son of God*, who hath suffered for your sins, and brought you the tidings of *pardon* & *salvation*, which you may have if you will give up your *selves* to him, who is the physitian of souls, to be healed by him. Live as men that believe, that the infinite love of God revealed to lost mankind in the Redeemer, doth bind us to love *him with all* our *hearts*, and serve him with all our restored *faculties*, and to work as those that have the *greatest thankfulness* to shew, as well as the greatest mercies to receive, and misrie to escape: &

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as thoſe that believe, that if ſinners that *without Chriſt* had no hope, ſhall now love their ſins, & refuſe to leave them, and to repent and be converted, and *unthankfully* reject the mercie of *ſalvation* ſo *dearly bought*, and ſo *freely offered them*, their damnation will be doubled as their ſin is doubled. Live but as men that have ſuch Redemption to admire, ſuch mercie to entertain, and ſuch a ſalvation to attain, and that are ſure *they* can never ſcape if *they* continue to neglect ſo great ſalvation, *Heb.* 2. 3. And is there *any* controverſie among Chriſtians in *any* of this? There is not certainly. 4. Live but as men that believe, that *the holy Ghoſt is given by Jeſus Chriſt to convert, to quicken, to ſanctifie all that he will ſave*: & that except *you* be born of the Spirit, *you* ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and that if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, the ſame is none of his, *Joh.* 3. 5, 6. *Rom.* 8. 9. And

that without this, no patching or mending of your lives by any common principles wil ſerve the turn for your ſalvation, or make you acceptable to God, *Heb.* 11. 6. Live as men that believe that this Spirit is given by the hearing of the word of God, and muſt be prayed for, and obeyed, & not reſiſted, quench'd, and griev'd. And is there any controverſie among Chriſtians in any of this? Ask thoſe that make a mock at Holineſſe, Sanctification, and the Spirit, whether they be not baptized into the Name of the Holy Ghoſt, and profeſs to believe in him as their Sanctifier, as well as in the Son as their Redeemer? And then ask them whether it be not a thing that ſhould make even a devil to tremble, to come ſo near the blaſphemy againſt the holy Ghoſt, as to mock at his Office and Sanctifying work, and at the holines, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord! *Heb.* 12. 14. and this after they

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are baptized, and profeſs to believe in the holy Ghoſt as their Sanctifier? 5. Live but as men that believe that ſin is the greateſt *evil*, the *thing* which the Holy Ghoſt abhorreth; and then you will never make a mock of it, as *Solomon* ſaith the fooliſh do, *Pro.*14.9. nor ſay, What harm is in it? 6. Live but as men that believe no *ſin* is pardoned without Repentance, and that Repentance is the loathing and forſaking of ſin; and if that it be true, it will not ſuffer you to live wilfully in any groſs ſin, nor to deſire to keep the leaſt infirmity, nor to be loth to know your unknown ſins. 7. Live as thoſe that believe that you are to be members *of the Holy Catholick Church*, and therein to hold the *Communion of Saints*. And then you will know, that it is not as a member of any Sect or Party, but as a holy member of this holy Church, that you muſt be ſaved: and that it is the name of a *Chriſtian* which is more honourable

ble then the name of any diviſion, or ſub-diviſion among Chriſtians, whether Greek, or Papiſt, or Poteſtant, or Prelatiſt, or Presbyterian, or Independent, or Anabaptiſt. It is eaſie to be of any one of theſe parties; but to be a *Chriſtian*, which all pretend to, is not ſo eaſie. It is eaſie to have a burning zeal for any divided party or cauſe, but the common zeal for Chriſtian Religion, is not ſo eaſie to be kindled, or kept alive, but requireth as much diligence to maintain it, as dividing zeal requireth to quench it. It is eaſie to love a party as a party; but to keep up Catholick charity to all Chriſtians, & to live in that holy love & converſe, which is requiſite to [a Chriſtian communion of Saints] is not ſo eaſie. Satan and corrupted nature befriend the love and zeal of faction, which is confined to a party on a controverted cauſe: but they are enemies to the love of Saints, and to the zeal for holineſs, and to the

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catholick charity, which is from the ſpirit of Chriſt. You ſee I call *you* not to diviſion, not to ſide with Sects, but to live as members of a holy Catholick Church, which conſiſteth of all that be holy in the world: and to live as thoſe that believe the *Communion of Saints*. 8. Live as thoſe that believe that there is a life everlaſting, where the Sanctified ſhall live in endleſs joy, and the unſanctified in endleſs puniſhment and woe: live but as men that verily believe a Heaven and a Hell, and a day of Judgment, in which all the actions of this life muſt be reviſed, & all men judged to their *endleſs* ſtate. *Believe* theſe things heartily, and then think a holy diligence needleſs if you can: Then be of the mind of the deriders & enemies of godlineſs if you can! If one ſight of Heaven or Hell would ſerve without any more ado, inſtead of other arguments to confute *all* the cavils of the diſtracted world, & to juſtifie the

moſt

moſt diligent Saints in the judgment of thoſe that now abhor them, why ſhould not a ſound belief of the ſame thing in its meaſure do the ſame? 9. Live but as thoſe that believe this life is given us as the only Time to make preparation for eternal life: and that all that ever ſhall be done for your ſalvation, muſt be Now, juſt Now, before your time is ended: Live as thoſe that know (and need not faith to tell them) that this time is ſhort, and almoſt at an end already, and ſtayeth for no man, but as a poſt doth haſte away: It will not ſtay while you are trimming you or ſporting you: it will not ſtay while you are taken up in Stage-plays, in complements, in idleneſs, or any impertinent needleſs thing; It wil not tarry *while* you ſpend yet the other year, or month, or day, in your *worldlineſs* or *ambition*, or in your luſts and ſenſual delights, & put off your Repentance to another time. O ſirs, for the Lords

ſake

ſake do but live as men that muſt ſhortly be buried in a grave, & their ſouls appear before the Lord, and as men that have but this little Time to do all for their everlaſting life, that ever muſt be done. O live as men that are ſure to die, and are not ſure to live till to morrow. And let not the noiſe of pleaſure or wordly buſineſs, or the chat or ſcorns of miſerable fools, bear down your reaſon, and make you live as if you knew not what you know, or as if there were any doubt about theſe things. Who is the man, and what is his name, that dare contradict them, and can make it good? O do not ſin againſt your knowledg: do not ſtand ſtill and ſee your glaſs running, and Time making ſuch haſt, and yet make no more haſte your ſelves, then if you were not concerned in it: Do not, O do not ſlumber, when Time and Judgment never ſlumber; nor ſit ſtill when you have ſo much to do, &

know

know *all* that is now left undone must be undone for ever! Alas, sirs, how many questions of exceeding weight have you yet to be resolved in? whether you are truly sanctified? whether your sins be pardoned? whether you shall be saved when you die? whether you are ready to leave this world, and enter upon another? I *tell you*, the answering of *these*, and *many* more such questions, is a matter of no *small difficulty* or *concernment*. And *all* these must be done in this *little* and *uncertain* time. It must be *Now* or *Never*. Live but as men that believe and consider these certain unquestionable things.

10. Lastly, Will you but live as men that believe that the world and the flesh are the *deadly* enemies of your *Salvation*; and that believe, that if any man love the world, (so far) the love of the Father is not in him, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15, 16. And as men that believe, that if ye *live* after flesh, ye shall

ſhall die, but if by the ſpirit ye mortifie the deeds of the bodie, ye ſhall live, *Rom.* 8. 13. and that thoſe that are in *Chriſt Jeſus*, and are freed from condemnation, are ſuch as walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 1. And that we muſt make no proviſion for the fleſh, to ſatisfie the will or luſts thereof, *Rom.* 13. 10. and muſt not walk in gluttonie & drunkenneſs, in chambering and wantonneſs, in ſtrife and *envying*, v. 13. but muſt have our *hearts* where our treaſure is, *Mat.* 6. 21. and converſe in Heaven, *Phil.* 3. 18, 19, 20. and being riſen with Chriſt, muſt ſeek the things that are above, and ſet our affections on them, and not on the things that are on earth, *Col.* 3. 1, 2, 3.

Sirs, will *you* ſay that *any* of this is our ſingular *opinion*, or matter of *controverſie* & *doubt*? Are not all Chriſtians agreed in it? Do *you* not *your*ſelves profeſs that *you* believe it? Live then but as *thoſe* that do believe it, & con-

condemn not *your* ſelves in the *things* that you confeſs.

I tell *thee*, if now thou wilt refuſe to live according to theſe common acknowledged *truths*, thou ſhalt *never* be *able* to *ſay* before *the Lord*, that mens *controverſie* about a *Ceremony* or *Church-Government*, of the manner or *worſhip*, were the *things* that hindred *thee*! but all *ſorts* & *ſects* ſhall be *witneſſes* againſt thee, and *condemn* thee, for *they* all *agreed* in theſe *things* even the bloodieſt ſect, that *impriſon*, and *torment* and *kill* others for their *differences* in *ſmaller matters*, are yet *agreed* with *thoſe* that they *perſecute*, and *murder*, about theſe *things*: Papiſts are *agreed* in them, and Proteſtants are *agreed* in them: All the *ſects* that are *now quarrelling* among us, & in the *world*, are *agreed* in them, who are but *meet* for the *name* of *Chriſtians*. All theſe *will be* ready to bear *witneſs* againſt the *prophane*, the *ſenſual*, the *ſloathful neglecter* of God and his

his Salvation, and to ſay, we all confeſſed, notwithſtanding our other differences, that all theſe things were certain truths, and that mens lives *ſhould be ordered according unto theſe.*

But if yet you pretend controverſie to cover your maligniry or ungodlineſs, I will go a little *further*, and tell *you*, that in the *matter* as well as in the *principles*, it is *things* that *we* are all agreed in, which I call you to, and which the ungodly do refuſe: I le briefly name them.

1. One part of your work which we urge you to do with all your *might* is, ſeriouſly & ſoberly to conſider often of all theſe *truths* before mentioned, which *you ſay you* do believe: And is it *any controverſie* with *reaſonable men* whether they ſhould *uſe* their *reaſon*? or with *believers* whether *they ſhould conſider and lay to heart the weight & uſe of the things which they believe*?

2. Another part of your work is to love

love God with all your soul & might and to make him your delight, & to seek first his Kingdom and the righteousness thereof; and to set your affections on things above, and to live on earth as the heirs of heaven: And is there any controversie among *Protestants*, *Papists*, or any about this?

3. Another part of your work, is, to see the honouring of God in the world, the promoting of his Kingdom and Government in your selves and others, the doing of his will and obeying of his Laws: And is there any controversie in this?

4. Another part of your work, is, to to mortifie the flesh, & to reject its *conceits*, and *desires*, and *lusts*, which resist the foresaid *obedience* to *God*; and to cast out *the inordinate love* and *care* of *worldly things*: to *refuse* the *counsels*, the *commands*, the *will*, the *enticements* and *perswasions* of man, which *contradict* the *commands* & *will* of *God*: & to forsake *all* that *you* have

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in the world rather then forſake your dear Redeemer, and hazard your ſalvation by any wilful ſin: To take up your Croſs and follow Chriſt through a life of ſuffering to glory; I know there is difficulty enough in all this, and that fleſh will repine againſt it and abhor it: But is there any *controverſie* about it among any true *believers*? Is not all this the expreſs *Command* of God, and neceſſary to ſalvation?

5. Another part of your work, is, to avoid *temptations*, and fly from the *occaſions* and *appearances* of evil, and not only *to avoid* that *which is* directly evil it *ſelf*, but that *alſo* which would draw you into evil (as far as you can) and to keep as far as may be from the brink of *hell* and danger, & to have no *fellowſhip* with the *unfruitful works* of *darknes*, nor be *companions* with *them*, but reprove *them*, and *mourn* for the *unclean* and *wicked converſation of the world*. This is it that we *intreat* of *you*: & *is there* any *matter* of controverſie in all this? 6. A_

6. Another part of the work which we call *you* to, is, to redeem this little Time that is allotted you; To make the beſt of it, and improve it to the greateſt furtherance of *your* ſalvation: To loſe none of it upon unprofitable things: to ſpend it in thoſe works wch will comfort you moſt when time is gone; If it will be more comfortable to you in the *day of Judgment*, that you have *ſpent your* Time in playes, & ſports, and idleneſs, & worldly cares, & pleaſures, then in ſerving God, & preparing for another life, then hold on, and do ſo to the end: But if it will not, then do what you would hear of, ſeeing you muſt hear of it: ſpend none of your time in idleneſs & unfruitful things, till you have no better and more neceſſary things to ſpend it in, & till you have Time to ſpare from more important work. This is our requeſt to *you*, that you would not loſe one hour of your pretious Time, but ſpend it as *thoſe that have loſt* too much

much, and have but a little more to ſpend in preparation for eternity. And is this any Schiſmatical or factious motion? Is there any thing controvertible, or which any Chriſtian can ſpeak againſt, in any of this?

7. Another part of your work, is, to ſearch the Scripture as that wch containeth *your* directions for *eternal life*, *Joh.*5.39. To love the Word of God more then *thouſands* of gold & ſilver, & perfer it before your *neceſſary food*, *Pſal.*119.72. *Job* 23.12. and to meditate in it day & night, as that which is your pleaſure and delight, *Pſa.*1.2. & as that which is able to make you wiſe unto Salvation, 2*Tim.*3.15. and to build you up, & give you an inheritance among the ſanctified, *Acts* 20. 32. That you lay up the word of God in your hearts, and teach them diligently to your children, and talk of them when you ſit in your houſes, and when you walk by the way, & when you lie down, and when you riſe up,

Deut.

*Deut.*6. 6,7. & 11.18,19. that ſo you &your *houſhoulds* may ſerve the*Lord*, *Joſh.* 24.15. This is the *work* that we call *you* to : And is *there any thing* that a *chriſtian* can make a *controverſie* of in all this? Is there any *thing* that *Proteſtants* are not agreed of?

8. Another part of your work, is, that you *guard* your *tongues*, and take not the *name* of *God* in vain, and *ſpeak* no *reproaches* or *ſlanders* againſt your *brethren*, & that no *corrupt communication* proceed out of your mouths, but that which is good to the uſe of *edifying*, & that it may miniſter *grace* unto the *hearers*, *Eph.* 4. 29. and that *fornication*, *uncleanneſs*, and *covetouſneſs* be not *once named* among *you*, as becometh *Saints* : neither *filthineſs*, nor *fooliſh talking*, nor *jeſting*, which are not *convenient*, but rather giving of *thanks*, *Eph.*5.3,4. And is *there any* thing of *doubt* or *controverſie* in this?

9. Another part of the work which we perſwade you to, is, to

to pray continually, 1 *Thes.* 5. 17. and not to wax faint, *Luke* 18. 1. to be fervent and importunate with God, as those that know the greatnesse of their necessity, *Luke* 18. 6, 7. *Jam.* 5. 16. That you pray with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, *Eph.* 6. 18. and in every thing by prayer and supplication to make known your requests to God, *Phil.* 4. 6. that you pray for Kings and all in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlinesse and honestie, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2. And is there any thing in all this that any Christian can deny?

10. Lastly, the work we call you to, is, to love your neighbours as your selves, and to do to others as you would have them (*arbitrio sano*) do to you. To scorn, deride, molest, imprison, slander, or hurt no man, till you would be so used your selves on the like occasion. To rejoyce in other mens profit and reputation as your own. To envy

none, to hate no man; to wrong none in their perſons, eſtates, or names: To preſerve the chaſtity, honour and eſtate of your neighbour as your own. To love your enemies, and forgive them that wrong you, and pray for them that hate, and hurt, and perſecute you. This is your work: And is there any thing of faction, Schiſm or controverſie in this? No, you ſhall ſhortly be convinced, that the differences and controverſies of believers, and the many opinions about Religion, were a wretched hypocrital pretence for your neglect and contempt of the ſubſtance of Religion, about which there was no difference, but all parties were agreed in the confeſſion of the truth, however hypocrites would not live according to their own profeſſions.

But perhaps you'l ſay, that there is ſuch difference in the *Manner* yet among them that agree in the *Principles* and the *Matter*, that you know

know not which way God is to be worshipped?

I answer, 1. Do you practise as aforesaid, according to the Principles and matter agreed on, or not? If you do not, it is but grosse hypocrisie to pretend disagreements in the *Manner*, as an excuse for your contempt or omission of the *Matter*, which all agree in. Forsooth your families shall be *prayerless*, and you will make a jeast of *serious prayer*, because some pray on a book, and some without, and some that are wisest, think that either way is lawful. Will God be deceived by such silly reasonings as these?

2. But this shall not hide the nakedness of your impiety. Will you also in the *Manner* of your obedience, but go so far as all *Christians* are *agreed* in? I will breifly then give you some particular instances.

1. The work of God must be *done with reverence*, in his *fear*: not like the common works of men, with

a common careleſſe frame of mind: God will be *ſanctified of all that draw near him*, *Lev.* 10. 3. He will be ſerved as God, and not as man: He will not be prayed to with a regardleſſe mind, as thoſe do that can divide their tongues from their *hearts*, and ſay over ſome cuſtomary words while they think of ſomething elſe. Is a dreadful thing for duſt to ſpeak to God Almighty; and a dangerous thing to ſpeak to him as ſlightly and regardleſly, as if we were talking to one of our companions. It beſeemeth a believer to have more of the fear of God upon his heart, in his *ordinary converſe* in the world, then hypocrites and formaliſts have in their moſt *ſolemn prayers*. Knoweſt thou the difference between God and man? Put then ſuch a difference between God and man in thy addreſſes, as his Majeſty requireth. And ſee alſo that thy *family* compoſe themſelves to a *reverent behaviour*, when they joyn with thee

thee in the worshipping of God. What have you to say now against this *reverent manner* of behaviour? Is there any thing controvertible in this?

2. It also requisite that you be *serious* and *sober* in all the service you perform to God. Do it not ludicrously, and with half a heart! Be as much more fervent and serious in seeking God and your salvation, then you are in seeking worldly things, as God and your Salvation is better then any thing in the world: Or if that be beyond your reach (though elsethere is reason for it) at least let the *greatest things* have the *greatest power* upon your hearts. You cannot pray more fervently for heaven then heaven deserveth. O let but the excellency and greatnesse of your work appear in the *serious manner* of your performance, I hope you cannot say that his is any point of controversie, unlesse it be a controversie whether a man

ſhould be an hypocrite, or be *ſerious* in the Religion which he doth profeſs.

3. It is requiſite that your ſervice of God be performed *underſtandingly*, Pſal. 47. 7. 1 Cor. 14, 15. God delighteth not in the blind devotion of men that know not what they do. Prayers not underſtood are indeed no prayers: For no mans deſire goeth further then his knowledge, and he expreſſeth not his deſires that knoweth not what he expreſſeth himſelf. Nor can he expect the concurrence of another mans deſires, that ſpeaketh what another underſtandeth not. The word that is not underſtood, cannot ſink into the heart and ſanctifie it: or if it be not well and ſoundlie underſtood, its eaſily ſtoln away by the tempter, *Mat.* 13. 19, 23. If underſtanding be neceſſarie in our common converſations, much more in our holy addreſſes to the Almighty, *Prov.* 17. 27. *A man of underſtanding is of an excel-*

cellent *Spirit*: but God hath *no pleaſure in fools*, or in their *Sacrifices*, Eceleſ. 5.1,4. nor is pleaſed with a Parrot-like lip-ſervice, which is not underſtood. He ſaith in deteſtation of the Hypocrites, *This people draweth near unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me*, Mat. 15.8,9. I hope then when we call you to ſerve God in judgment, & with underſtanding, we call you to nothing that a Chriſtian ſhould make queſtion of.

4. *God is a Spirit*, and they that ſerve him muſt ſerve *him in Spirit and in truth*, Joh.4. 24. *The Father ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him*, ver. 23. He calleth for the *heart*: he looketh for the inward deſires of the ſoul: He converſeth with minds that are *abſtracted* from vanity, and are *ſeriouſly* taken up in attending him, and are intent upon the work they do: The *carkaſs* of a *Prayer* ſeparated from the *Life* of it, ſtinketh before the holy God. As he will be *loved*,

ſo will he be *ſerved with all the heart and ſoul and might*. And do we call you then to any thing that is doubtful, when we call you to the Spiritual worſhipping of God.

5. Yet we maintain that the *body* hath its part in the ſervice of God as well as the *ſoul*, and the *body* muſt expreſſe the inward reverence and devotion of the ſoul; though not in a way of *hypocritical oſtentation*, yet in a way of *ſerious adoration*. The bowing of the knee, the uncovering of the head, and reverent deportment, and whatſoever nature, or common uſe, and holy inſtitution hath made an expreſſion of holy affections, and a decent and grave behaviour of our ſelves, ſhould be carefully obſerved in the preſence of the moſt High, and the holy things of God more reverently to be reſpected then the preſence of any mortal man. And the rather becauſe that a grave, and reverent, and holy manner of deportment in Gods worſhip,

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reflecteth upon the heart, and helpeth us in our inward and ſpiritual devotion: & it helpeth the beholders, and awakeneth them to reverent thoughts of God, and holy things; which a regardleſs and common manner of deportment would extinguiſh. And its no diſhonour to *reverent behaviour*, that it is the uſe of *Hypocrites*, but rather an honour to it; For it is ſomething that is *good* that the *Hypocrite* uſeth for the cloak of his ſecret *emptineſs* or *evil*. If there were nothing *good in reverent behaviour* before God, it would not ſerve the *Hypocrites* turn. As it is a commendation to *long-prayer*, that the Phariſees made it their pretence for the devouring of widdows houſes: And thoſe that call them hypocrites that are much in *holy exerciſes* and *ſpeeches*, ſhould conſider, that if *holy exerciſes* and *ſpeeches* were not good, they were not fit for the hypocrites deſign; *evil* will not be a fit cloak for *evil*: that which the

hypocrite thinks neceſſary to the *covering* of *his ſin*, we muſt think *more neceſſary* to the *cure* of our ſin and the ſaving of our ſouls; The way to *avoid hypocriſie* is not by running into *impiety* and *prophaneſs*: we muſt *do more* then the *hypocrite*, and not leſs, elſe he will riſe up in judgement againſt you, and condemn you, if he would do more to *ſeem good*, then you will do to *be good*, and to pleaſe your Maker: if a Phariſee will *pray longer* to colour his oppreſſion, then you will do to *attain ſalvation*. The miſchief of *hypocriſie* is, that the *ſoul* of Religion is wanting, while the *corps* is *preſent*: And will you caſt away both *ſoul and body*: both *inſide* and *outſide*, in oppoſition to *hypocriſie*? If others do *ſeem* to love God when they do not, will you therefore not ſo much as *ſeem* to do it? So here about *reverence* in the ſervice of God: The *hypocrite* ſhould not *exceed* the *ſincere* in any thing that is truly good. This

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is the *manner* of Gods ſervice that I perſwade you to, and to no other: And is there any thing of controverſie in this? Prefer but the ſpiritual part, and know but what that meaneth, [*I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice*] that ſo you may not *condemn the innocent*, and you ſhall never ſay that we will be more backward then you to *decency*, and *reverent behaviour* in Gods ſervice.

6. God will be ſerved in *Purity* and *Holineſs*, with cleanſed hearts and hands, and not with ſuch as remain defiled with the guilt of any wilful ſin. He abhorreth the *ſacrifice* of the wicked and diſobedient. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, his prayers are abominable*, Prov. 28. 9. and 15. 8. & 21. 27. Iſa. 1. 13. Eccleſ. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. [*To what purpoſe is the multitude of your Sacrifices unto me? ſaith the Lord*, (to oppreſſing wicked men) *Iſa.* 1. 11. *When you come to appear before me, who hath required this at*

your

your hand to tread my Courts? Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination to me: the new Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of Assemblies I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting, &c. ver. 12, 13. *And when you spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you; yea when you make many prayers I will not hear; your hands are full of blood: Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widdow; Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord.*]

To play the *glutton*, or *drunkard*, or filthy *fornicator* in the *day time*, & then to come to God at *night*, as if it were to make him amends by an hypocritical prayer; to *blaspheme* Gods *Name*, and oppose his *Kingdom* and *Government* in your selves and others, and to do your *own will*, and hate and scorn them that do *his will*,

and

and ſtudy *his will* that they may do it, and then to *pray that Gods Name may be hallowed, his Kingdom come, and his Will be done*] is an abuſing God, and not a *ſerving* or *pleaſing* him. *Live* according to your *prayers*, and let your *lives* ſhew as well as your *words* what it is that you *deſire*. This is the ſervice of God that we call you to: And can you ſay that there is any thing controvertible in all this? Are there any men of any party among Chriſtians, or ſober Infidels that dare contradict it?

7. God will be ſerved *entirely* and *univerſally*: in all his Commands; and with all your faculties, in works of *Piety*, *Juſtice*, and *Charity*, which muſt never be ſeparated: You muſt not pretend your *Charity* againſt duties of *Piety*; for God is to be preferred in your eſtimation, love and ſervice; and all that is done for *men*, muſt be done for *his ſake*. You muſt not ſet up duties of *Piety* againſt duties of *Juſtice*, *Charity*

rity and *Sobriety*: It is not *true Piety* that will not bring forth these. *God* must be *loved above all*, and our *neighbours as our selves*; and these two *sorts* of *love* are inseparable. Do *all the good* you can to *all* while you have *opportunity*; *especially to them of the houshold of faith*, Gal. 6. 10. What good you would *hear of* in the day of your accounts, that *do now*, speedily, diligently, and sincerely, according to your power. Say not, I may come to want my self, but [*cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many dayes; give a portion to seven, and also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth*, Eccles. 11. 1, 2.] and whether all may not quickly be taken from thee; and then thou wilt wish thou hadst done good with it whilst thou hadst it, and lent it to the Lord, and *trusted* him with thy *remainder*, who entrusted thee with his *blessings*; and hadst made thee *friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness*,

ouſneſs, that when all fail they might receive thee into the everlaſting habitations. Drop not now and then a ſcant and grudging alms, as if thou were a *loſer* by it, and God muſt be be beholden to thee; but believe, that the greateſt gain is to thy ſelf, and look after ſuch bargains, and do good as readily, and gladly, & liberally, as one that verily expecteth a ful reward in Heaven. This is part of the ſervice of God that we exhort you to, even to viſit, and relieve, and love Chriſt in his members and brethren (*Mat.*25.) and is there any thing of *doubt* or *controverſie in all this?*

8. Moreover, God will be ſerved with *Love, and willingneſs, and delight*: It is the moſt gainful, honourable, bleſſed, and pleaſant work in the world, which he hath appointed you, and not a *tailſome* task or ſlavery: And therefore it is not a Melancholy, pining, troubleſom courſe of life that we perſwade you to, under

der the name of Godliness; but it is to rejoyce in the Lord, and to live in the joyful expectations of Eternal Life, and in the sense and assurance of the Love of God. If you could shew us any probability of a more pleasant and joyful life on Earth, then that which serious Holiness doth afford, I should be glad with all my heart to hearken to you. I am ready to tell you what is the ground of *our comforts*, which faith revealeth: If you will come, and soberly debate the case, and shew us the matter and ground of *your comforts*, which you have or hope for in any other way: if *yours* prove *greater*, and *better*, and *surer* then the *joys of faith*, we will hearken to you, and be of your mind and side.

The matter of the *joyes* of a *Believer* is, that all his sins are pardoned; that God is reconciled to him in Christ; that he hath the promise of God, that all things, even the greatest sufferings, shall work together

ther for his good; that he is always in the love, and care, and hands of God; that he hath leave to draw near him by holy prayer, and open his heart to him in all his ſtraits and wants; that he may ſolace himſelf in his Praiſes and Thankſgiving, and in other parts of holy worſhip; that he may read and hear his holy Word, the ſure diſcovery of the will of God, and revelation of the things unſeen, and the Charter of his Inheritance; that he may exerciſe his ſoul in the ſerious believing thoughts of the Love of God revealed in the wonderful work of our Redemption, and of the perſon, and office, and grace of Jeſus Chriſt our Redeemer; and that he may love that God that hath ſo wonderfully loved him; that he hath the Spirit of God to quicken and actuate his ſoul, to ſupply his ſpiritual defects, and kill his ſins, and help him to Believe, to Love, to Rejoyce, to Pray: that this Spirit is

Gods

Gods Seal upon him, and the earneſt of everlaſting life; that Death ſhall not kill his hopes, nor end his happineſs, but that his felicity and fulleſt joy beginneth, when that of worldlings hath an end, and their endleſs miſery begins; that he is delivered from everlaſting torment by the redemption of Chriſt, and the ſanctification of the ſpirit; that Angels will attend his departing ſoul into the preſence of his Father; that he ſhall be with his glorified Redeemer, and behold his Glory; that his body ſhall be raiſed to everlaſting life: that he ſhall be juſtified by Chriſt from all the accuſations of the Devil, and all the ſlanders of the malicious world; that he ſhall live with God in endleſs Glory, and ſee and enjoy the Glory of his Creator, and ſhall never more be troubled with enemies, with ſin or ſorrow, but among his holy ones, ſhall perfectly and moſt joyfully love and praiſe the Lord for ever.

Theſe

These are the matter of a *Believers joy*: *These*, purchased by Christ, revealed in his Word, sealed by his Miracles, his Blood, his Sacraments, and his Spirit, are our comfort. *This* is the *Religion*, the *labour* that we invite you to: It is not to *despair*, nor to some dry unprofitable toil, nor to self-troubling, grieving, miserable melancholy, nor to costly Sacrifices, or idle Ceremonies, or irrational Service, such as the Heathens offered to their Idols; it is not to cast away all mirth and comfort, and to turn unsociable, and morose, and sower: but it is to the greatest joys that the world alloweth, and nature is here capable of, and reason can discern and own: It is to begin a truly merry sociable life: It is to fly from fear & sorrow, in flying from sin and Hell, and from the consuming wrath of God: It is to the foretastes of everlasting joys, and to the beginnings of eternal life. This the *labour*, the *Religion*, which we would

have you follow with all your might.

If you have *better* things to ſeek, and follow, and find, let us ſee them, that we may be as wiſe as you. If you have not, for your ſouls ſake, make not choice of vanity, which will deceive you in the day of your *neceſſity*.

But you muſt not think to make us believe that a great houſe, or a horſe or a whore, or a feaſt, or a flatterer, or fine cloaths, or any childiſh toys, or brutiſh filthineſs, are more comfortable things then Chriſt, and Everlaſting Life, or that it is ſweeter and better to love a harlot, or lands, or mony, then to love God, and Grace, and Glory: nor that any thing that will go no further then the Grave with you, is as good as that which will endure to Eternity; nor that any pleaſure which a dog or ſwine hath, is equal to the delights of the Angels of Heaven: If you would have us of your *mind*, you muſt not be of this *mind*, nor perſwade us to ſuch horrible things as theſe. But

we

we profess to you and all the world, that we are not so in love with *sorrows* or *sowrness*, nor so fallen out with *joy* and *pleasures*, as to *choose* a life of miserable *sadness*, or refuse a life of *true delight*. If we could hear from any man, or find by the most diligent inquiry, that there is a more full, and sweet, and rational, and satisfactory, and durable delight to be had in any other way, then that of *serious faith and holiness*, which Christ in Scripture hath revealed to us, we were like enough to hearken after it.

But can the distracted sensual world believe that its sweeter and happier to ruffle it out in fleshly gallantry and sport, and to rage against the godly for a while, till the vengeance of God lay hold upon them, and give them their reward, then to live in the love of God, and wait in patience for the performance of Gods promise of everlasting joy? Oh what a thing is fleshly passion,

and

and raging ſenſuality, and blind unbelief! The Lord have mercy upon poor deluded ſinners; the Devils buſineſs is to turn the world into a *Bedlam*; and alas, how ſtrangely hath he prevail'd! That ſo many men can take their *greateſt miſery* for their *happineſs*, and the *only happineſs* for an *intollerable life*! Yea, and be ſo *angry* with all that are not of their mind, and will not ſet as much by filth and foolery, and as little by God and Glory as they? Like the Noble man that was Lunatick, or mad by fits, and when ever he was mad, he would ſwear all were mad that ſaid not as he ſaid, and would make all his ſervants be ſent to *Bedlam* that would not immitate him, and there they muſt lie as mad men till their Lord was recovered from *his madneſs*. So are Gods ſervants uſed, and talkt of in the world, as if they were beſide themſelves, as long as the world is uncured of its madneſs. As the *Man is*, ſo is *his judge-*

ment,

ment, and ſuch is his *reliſh*, and *deſire*, and *delight*: When I was a child, I had far more deſire to fill my pin-box, then now I have to fill my purſe, and accounted it a greater treaſure, and had much more delight and contentment in it. And alas, we may remember ſince we were ſtrangers to the reliſh of Heavenly things, that we found more pleaſure in that of which we are now aſhamed, then we did in the moſt high and excellent things. Let us therefore pitty and pray for thoſe that are diſtempered with the ſame diſeaſe.

I have been longer on this then I thought to have been, becauſe men think that we call them from *all Mirth, & Joy, & pleaſure*, to a *ſowre heavy, melancholy* life, when we call them to *ſerious diligence* for their ſalvation. As if levity & folly were the only freinds to *Pleaſure*, and it were only to be found in childiſh, worthleſs, tranſitory things. And as if the greateſt

greateſt everlaſting Happineſs were no matter of true Delight, nor Seriouſneſs, or Diligence of a friend to *Joy*.

9. Moreover, as to the manner, God will be ſerved with abſolute ſelf-reſignation, without *Exceptions*, *Limitations* or *Reſerves*: Not with the leavings of the fleſh, nor with a *Proviſo* that you may not ſuffer by your Religion, or be *poor*, or *deſpiſed*, or *abuſed* by the world: But with *ſelf-denyal* you muſt lay down all the fleſhes intereſt at his feet; and you muſt take up your Croſs, and follow a ſuffering Chriſt to Glory. You muſt ſerve him as thoſe that are wholly His, and not your own, and have nothing but what is his, and therefore nothing to be *excepted*, *reſerved or ſaved from him*; but muſt be content that *you* and all *your* intereſt be in his hands, and *ſaved by him*, if ſaved at all. I know theſe termsſeem hard to fleſh and blood (and ſhould Heaven be the Crown and reward to them, that have undergone

dergone no tryal for it?) But here is nothing but what is past all *controversy*, and all Christians do confess is the Word of Christ.

10. Lastly, God will be served *resolvedly* and *constantly*: If you will *raign*, you must *conquer* and *endure to the end*. *Opposition* you must expect; and overcome it, if you would not be overcome. It is not good beginnings that will serve turn, unless you also persevere, and fight out the good fight of faith, and finish your course, and patiently wait to the last breath, for the Crown of Righteousness, which the Righteous Judge will give the Conquerours, when the unbelieving world shall say of all their Delight and Hope [Its past and gone, we shall never see or tast it more] but must now tast of that endless wrath of God which we were treasuring up, when we should have workt out our salvation.

Well sirs, I have all this while been describing to you, both as to

the *Principles*, the *Matter* and the *Manner*, what that Religion and Service of God is, in which you muſt labour with all your might: that you may ſee that it is no factious or private opinions or practices that we call you to; and that your conſciences may no longer be deluded with the pretences of mens different opinions in Religion; and that the names of Prelatical, Presbyterian, Puritan, Papiſt, nor any other ſounding in your ears, may not ſo diſtract and doat you, as to make you forget the name of *Chriſtian* which you have all undertaken, nor what the Chriſtian Religion is. You ſee now that it is nothing (no not a ſyllable or tittle) which all ſober Chriſtians are not agreed in, that we perſwade you to do as the work of your Religion: And therefore I tell you again here, before that God that ſhall be your Judge, and that Conſcience that ſhall be as a thouſand witneſſes, that if you will go on

on in ungodly worldly lives, and refuse the *serious diligence* of Christians in *this Religion* which *your selves profess*, it shall be so far from being any excuse or ease to you, that there were *Hypocrites*, or *Heretick*s, or *Schismaticks*, or *different opinions in Religion* in the world, that this very thing shall aggravate your sin and condemnation, that all these Hypocrites, Schismaticks, or differing parties in the Church, did *agree* in the confession of *all these things*, and yet for all that you would not practice them: no nor practice what *your selves confessed*: All these Parties or Sects shall rise up against the sensual and prophane ungodly sinner, and say, [Though we were ignorant or doubtful of many other things, yet we are all agreed in these: we gave our concurrent testimony for them: we tempted no man to doubt of these, or to deny them.] If you will *erre more* then an *Hypocrite*, or a *Schismatick*, and be

far *worse* then thoſe that are ſuch, or *you account* ſuch, and think to excuſe it, becauſe *they erred* in leſſer things, it is as if the devil ſhould excuſe his ſin by ſaying; [Lord, thy Saints did none of them love thee as they ſhould, and Hypocrites did but *ſeem* to love thee, and therefore I thought I might hate thee and ſet againſt thy wayes.]

BUT (ſaith the ungodly ſenſualiſt) *I will never believe that God delighteth in long and earneſt prayers: or that he is moved by the paſſions or the words of men; and therefore I take this but for babling, which you call the ſerious diligence of Believers, in their ſerving God.*]

To this impious objection, I return theſe ſeveral anſwers.

1. I ſuppoſe this were true as you imagine, what's this to you that ſerve God *no way at all* with any *ſerious diligence?* that live in ſenſuality, and wilful diſobedience to his Laws, and do more for your bodies then

then for your ſouls, and for temporal things, then for eternal?

2. Who do you think is likeſt to underſtand Gods mind, and what is pleaſing to him? Himſelf or you? Is any thing more plainly commanded in Gods Word then *praying* with *frequency*, *fervency*, and *importunity*? Luk. 18. 1,2,3,4,5,6,7. 1 Theſ. 5. 17. Jam. 5. 16. And will you tell God that he hath but diſſembled with you, and told you that he is pleaſed with that which is not pleaſing to him?

3. And what is the reaſon of your unbelief? forſooth, becauſe God is not moved with humane words or paſſions! I grant he is not. But what of that? Hath prayer no other uſe but to move God? It is enough, 1. That it moveth us, and fiteth us to receive his mercies. 2. And that God hath made it neceſſary to the effect, and a means or condition without which he will not give thee the bleſſing. Do you think (if you

judge but by natural reaſon) that a perſon is as fit for a mercy that knoweth not the want or worth of it, and would not be thankful for it if he had it, as one that valueth it, and is diſpoſed to thankfulneſs and improvement? And do you not know that holy prayer is nothing but the actuating of holy deſires, and the exerciſe of all thoſe graces which are ſuited to the due eſtimation and improvement of the mercy. And is it not the way when we would draw the *boat* to the *bank*, to lay hold of the *bank* and pull, as if we would draw it to the *boat*? If God be not moved and drawn to us, it is enough that we are moved and drawn to God: And with all that God may give his own bleſſings to whom and upon what terms he pleaſe, and that he hath aſſured us he will give them but to thoſe that value, deſire, and ſeek them, and that with faith, and fervency, and importunity.

And

And yet I may add, that God is ſo far above us, as that his incomprehenſible eſſence, and bleſſed nature is very little known to us; and therefore though we know and confeſs that he hath no humane paſſions or imperfections, yet if he aſſume to himſelf the title of ſuch a thing as love, deſire, joy or wrath, we muſt in reaſon believe, that though theſe are not in God as they are in man, with any imperfection, yet there is ſomething in God that cannot fitlier be repreſented to man, nor be underſtood by man, then by the Images of ſuch expreſſions as God himſelf is pleaſed to uſe.

3. But I beſeech you hearken to *Natu e* it ſelf. Doth it not teach all rational creatures in neceſſity to *pray to God*? A ſtorm will teach the prophaneſt Sea-man to pray, and that with continuance and fervency. The Mariners could ſay to *Jonah* in their danger [*What meaneſt thou, O ſleeper? ariſe, call upon thy*

God; if ſo be that God will think upon us, that we periſh not.] And *they* themſelves *cryed every man unto his God*, Jon. 1.5,6. When thou comeſt *to dye*, and ſeeſt there is no more delay, nor any more hope from the pleaſures of ſin, or from any of thy companions or old deceits, then tell me whether *nature* teach thee not to cry, and cry mightily for pardon, and mercy, and help to God? Then we ſhall hear thee crying [O Mercy, mercy Lord, upon a miſerable ſinner] though now thou wilt not believe that prayer doth any good.

Ile ſay no more to thee of this. If Nature be not conquered, and Grace have not forſaken thee, thou wilt be taught at home to anſwer this objection. Sure thou canſt not eaſily ſo far conquer reaſon, as to believe that there is no God. And if thou believe that there is a God, thou canſt not believe that he is not to be worſhipped, and that with the greateſt ſeriouſneſs and diligence! Nor that

that he is not the giver of all that thou doſt want! Or that the Governour of the world regardeth not the diſpoſitions and actions of his ſubjects, but will equally reward the good and bad, and give to all alike, and have no reſpect to mens preparations for his reward. What Heathen that believeth that there is a God, doth not believe that Prayer to him is a neceſſary part of his worſhip?

Obj. *But is not your ſtrict obſervation of the Lords day a controverted thing?*

Anſw. In this alſo I will ſtrip thee of this excuſe. 1. Spend the Lords day but according to the common principles of Chriſtianity and reaſon, and it ſhall ſuffice: Spend it but as one that loveth God better then any thing in the world, and that taketh more pleaſure in his ſervice then in ſin and vanity: Spend it but as the *neceſſities* of thy *own ſoul*, and thy *families* require; as one that's glad of ſo honourable,

gainful, and delightful an imployment, as the publick and private worshipping of God, and the serious contemplation of the life to come: As one that knoweth the need and benefit of having stated times for the service of God; and what would come of all Religion, if the Time were left to each ones will? Spend it as men that put a just difference between the common business of this world, and the things that concern your endless state, and that have considered the proportion of one day in seven, in reference to this different consequence of the work: Spend it as men that have lost as much time as you have done, and have need to make the best of the little that is left,; and that are behind hand so far in the matters of your salvation, and have need to work with all your might, and should be gladder of the helps of such a day, then of thousands of gold and silver: Spend it as those that

that believe that we owe God as much ſervice as the *Jews* did: Spend it as the Ancient Chriſtians ſpent it, that were wont to ſtay together almoſt from morning till night in publick worſhip and Communion: Spend it as the Kings Declaration requireth, which ſaith [*Our purpoſe and reſolution is, and ſhall be, to take care that the Lords day be applied to holy exerciſes, without unneceſſary divertiſements.*]

2. And if yet there be any doubt in this, I refer you to the judgment of the Church of *England*, expreſſed in the *Homily of the Time and Place of Prayer*. And for the *Time*, the *Name*, the *Antiquity*, the *Authority*, & the *Work* it ſelf, I deſire you but to receive what is there delivered, not by any factious perſons, but by the Church. Do this, and we are agreed and ſatisfied. And I make it my requeſt to the Reader, to peruſe both *Parts* of that *Homily*, that he may know how far the Church of *England*

land is from the looſe conceits of the enemies of Godlineſs: And if alſo you will read over the Homilies againſt the peril of Idolatry, you will the fuller know the Judgement of the Church about the manner of Gods worſhip. (Indeed the whole Book is ſuch as the people ſhould be acquainted with.)

I Have done my part to open to you the Neceſſity of *SERIOUS DILIGENCE*, and to call up the ſluggiſh ſouls of ſinners to mind the work of their ſalvation, and to do it *SPEEDILY*, and with all their *MIGHT*. I muſt now leave the ſucceſs to God and you. What uſe you will make of it, and what you will be and do for the time to come, is a matter that more concerneth your ſelves then me. If long ſpeaking, or multitude of words, were the way to prevail with you, I ſhould willingly ſpeak here while

while my ſtrength would endure, and lengthen out my exhortations yet ſeven-fold. But that's not the way: A little wearieth you: You love long feaſts, and long viſits, and plays, and ſports, much better then long Sermons, or Books, or Prayers. But it is no ſmall grief to us, to leave you in a caſe of ſuch importance, without ſome conſiderable hopes of your deliverance.

Sirs, the matter is now laid before you, and much in your own hands; it will not be ſo long! What will ye now do? Have I *convinced* you now, that God and your ſalvation are to be ſought with all your might? If I have not, it is not for want of evidence in what is ſaid, but for want of willingneſs in your ſelves to know the truth: I have proved to you, that it is a matter *out of controverſie*, unleſs your luſts, and paſſions, and carnal intereſt will *make a controverſie* of it. I beſeech you tell me, if you be of any Reli-

gion

gion at all, why are you not *ſtrict*, *ſerious*, and *diligent*, and *mortified*, and *Heavenly in that Religion* which you are of? Sure you will not ſo far ſhame your own *Religion*, whatever it be, as to ſay that your Religion is not for mortification, holineſſe, heavenlineſs, ſelf-denial, or that your Religion alloweth you to be ambitious, covetous, gluttonous, drunken, to curſe, and ſwear, and whore, and raile, and oppreſs the innocent; It is not *Religion*, but *Diabolical ſerpentine malignity* that is for any of this.

Its wonderful to think, that learned men, and Gentlemen, and men that pretend to reaſon and ingenuity, can quietly betray their ſouls to the Devil upon ſuch ſilly grounds, and do the evil that they have no more to ſay for, and neglect that duty that they have no more to ſay againſt, when they know they muſt do it *NOW* or *NEVER*! That while they *confeſſe* that there is a God,

God, and a life to come, a Heaven and a Hell, and that this life is purposely given us for preparation for Eternity, while they confess that God is most wise, and holy, and good, and just, and that sin is the greatest evil, and that the Word of God is true, they can yet make shift to quiet themselves in an unholy, sensual, careless life: And that while they honour the Apostles and Martyrs, and Saints that are dead and gone, they hate their successors and imitators, and the lives that they lived, and are inclined to make more Martyrs by their malicious cruelty.

Alas, all this comes from the want of a sound belief of the things which they never saw; and the distance of those things, & the power of passion, and sensual objects and inclinations, that hurry them away after present vanities, and conquer reason, and rob them of their humanity; and by the noise of the com-

company of ſenſual ſinners, that harden and deaffen one another, and by the juſt judgement of God, forſaking thoſe that would not know him, and leaving them to the blindneſs and hardneſs of their hearts. But is there *no remedy*! O thou the fountain of mercy and relief, vouchſafe theſe miſerable ſinners a remedy! O thou the Saviour of loſt mankind, have mercy upon theſe ſinners in the depth of their ſecurity, preſumption, and miſery! O thou the Illuminater and Sanctifier of ſouls, apply the remedy ſo dearly purchaſed! We are conſtrained oft to fear leſt it be much long of *us*, that ſhould more *ſeriouſly* preach the awakening truths of God unto mens hearts. And verily our conſciences cannot but accuſe us, that when we are moſt *lively* and ſerious, alas, we ſeem but almoſt to trifle, conſidering on what a meſſage we come, and of what tranſcendent things we ſpeak. But Satan hath got

got his advantage upon *our hearts* that ſhould be inſtrumental to kindle *theirs*, as well as on *theirs* that ſhould receive the truth. O that we could thirſt more after their ſalvation! O that we could pray harder for it; and entreat them more earneſtly; as thoſe that were loath to take a denial from God or man; I muſt confeſs to you all with ſhame and ſorrow, that I am even amazed to think of the hardneſs of my own heart, that melteth no more in compaſſion to the miſerable, and is no more earneſt and importunate with ſinners, when I am upon ſuch a *ſubject as this*; and am telling them that it muſt be NOW or NEVER; and when the meſſengers of *Death within*, and the *fame of mens diſpleaſure* from *without*, doth tell me how likely it is that *my Time* ſhall be but *ſhort*, and that if I will ſay any thing that may reach the hearts of ſinners, for ought I know, it muſt be NOW or NEVER. O what an obſtinate

ſtinate, what a lamentable diſeaſe is this inſenſibility and hardneſs of heart! If I were ſure this were the laſt Sermon that ever I ſhould preach, I find now my heart would ſhew its ſluggiſhneſs, and rob poor ſouls of the *ſerious fervour* which is ſuitable to the ſubject and their caſe, and needful to the deſired ſucceſs.

But yet poor ſleepy ſinners, *hear us*: Though we ſpeak not to you as men would do that had *ſeen Heaven* and *Hell*, and were themſelves in a perfectly awakned frame, yet *hear us* while we ſpeak to you the *words of truth* with ſome *ſeriouſneſs*, and compaſſionate deſire of your Salvation. O look up to your God! Look out unto eternity: Look inwardly upon your ſouls: Look wiſely upon your ſhort and haſty Time: and then bethink you how the little remnant of your Time ſhould be employed: and what it is that *moſt* concerneth you to diſpatch and ſecure before you die.

die. *Now* you have *Sermons*, and *Books*, and *Warnings*: It will not be ſo long: Preachers muſt have done: *God* threatneth them, and *death* threatneth them, and *men* threaten them, and its *you*, its *you* that are moſt ſeverely threatned, and that are called on by Gods warnings, [*If any man have an ear to hear, let him hear.*] *Now* you have an abundance of private helps, you have abundance of underſtanding gracious companions; you have the Lords dayes to ſpend in holy exerciſes, for the edification and ſolace of your ſouls; you have choice of ſound and ſerious Books: and bleſſed be God, you have the Proteſtion of a Chriſtian and a Proteſtant King and Magiſtracy: O what unvaluable mercies are all theſe! O know your time, and uſe theſe with induſtry, and improve this harveſt for your ſouls! For it will not be thus alwayes: It muſt be NOW or NEVER.

You

You have yet time and leave to Pray and cry to God in hope: Yet if you have hearts and tongues, he hath an hearing ear: The Spirit of grace is ready to assist you: It will not be thus *alwayes*: The time is coming when the loudest cries will do no good: O pray, pray, pray poor needy miserable sinners; for it must be NOW or NEVER.

You have *yet* health and strength, and bodies fit to serve your souls: It will not be so *alwayes*: Languishing and paines and death are coming. O use your health and strength for God: For it must be NOW or NEVER.

Yet there are some stirrings of *conviction* in your *Consciences*: You find that all is not well with you: and you have some thoughts or purposes to repent, and be new creatures: There is some hope in this, that yet God hath not quite forsaken you. O trifle not, and stifle

ſtifle not the conviction of your conſciences, but hearken to the witneſſe of God within you: It muſt be NOW or NEVER.

Would you not be loath to be left to the deſpairing caſe of many poor diſtreſſed ſouls, that cry out, *O it is now too late! I fear my day of grace is paſt; God will not hear me now if I ſhould call upon him: he hath forſaken me, and given me over to my ſelf. It is too late to repent, too late to pray, too late to think of a new life; all is too late.* This caſe is ſad: But yet many of theſe are in a ſafer and better caſe then they imagine, and are but *frightened* by the tempter, and it is *not too late*, while they cry out, *It is too late*: But if you are left to cry in *hell* [*It is too late*] alas, how *long* and how *doleful* a cry and lamentation will it be!

O conſider poor ſinner, that God knoweth the *Time* and *Seaſon* of thy *mercies*: He giveth thee *Spring* and *Harveſt* in their *Seaſon*: and all his mer-

mercies in their *Seaſon*, and wilt thou not know thy *Time* and *Seaſon*, for *love*, and *duty*, and *thanks* to him?

Conſider that God who hath commanded thee thy work, hath alſo appointed thee thy time: And this is his appointed time. To day therefore hearken to his voice, and ſee that thou harden not thy heart: He that bids thee *Repent and work out thy Salvation with fear and trembling*, doth alſo bid thee do it *Now*: *Obey* him in the *time*, if thou wilt be *indeed obedient*: He beſt underſtandeth the fitteſt time. One would think to men that have loſt ſo much time already, and loitered ſo long, & are ſo lamentably behind hand, and ſtand ſo near the bar of God, and their everlaſting ſtate, there ſhould be no need to ſay any more, to perſwade them to be up and doing. I ſhall add but this: *You are never like to have a better time.* Take this or the work will grow more *difficult*, more *doubtful*, if through the juſt judg-

judgement of God, it become not *desperate*. If all this will not serve, but still you will loiter till time be gone, what can your poor friends do but lament your misery! The Lord knowes, if we knew what words, what pains, what cost would tend to your awakening, and conversion and salvation, we should be glad to submit to it: and we hope we should not think our labours, or liberties, or our lives too dear to promote so blessed and so necessary a work. But if when all is done that we can do, you will leave us nothing but our tears and moans for self-destroyers, the sin is yours, and the suffering shall be yours: If I can do no more, I shall leave this upon record, that *we took our time* to tell you home, that SERIOUS DILIGENCE is nessary to your Salvation, and that *God* is the *Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, Heb. 11.6. and that *this* was your *day*, your *only day*: It must be NOW or NEVER.

FINIS.